

COUNTRY LIFE

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Photo. by LAFAYETTE,

THE HON. KATHLEEN DE MONTMORENCY.

179, New Bond Street.

OYSTER CULTURE.—II.

AT the end of the last article we left the young oyster cleaving to the parent shell, awaiting what changes in life Nature or art might have in store for it. It was about July when it settled down on to the shell, after floating for a while on the water's surface; and, since this was the manner of its locating itself, it is evident that the term "parent" shell is used by courtesy only. The oyster cannot be expected to have filial sentiments, for it has no guarantee that the shell on which it settles is that of its own parent; in fact, the odds are very many millions to one that it is not. Still, it cleaves to the shell it has attached itself to in July, until removed from it about March. But even in the previous autumn, man, that violent disturber of Nature, will have dealt drastically with it. About September he will have come sailing over the oyster-bed in a skiff, dragging behind him a dredge made of iron and of small network—the net being made of horse-hide, for this dragging over oyster shells is no business for fine twine. With this machine he will have caused great disturbance of the oyster-bed, dragging up some of its people that have the spat in them, some that have little ones clinging to them, and others that have none of these special claims on his mercy. On each side of his skiff there is one of these dredges, so that the numbers he drags up are past reckoning. All these oysters, without distinction, he takes to the pits, but he does not put them all into the same pit without distinction. Those with brood or spat he puts apart from the others that are ripe for the market; but this age of maturity the oyster does not reach until he is five years old. In the meantime the brood oysters, adhering to the so-called parent shell, are taken ashore and deposited in the pits. The first illustration shows the oysters being taken from the skiff to the pits, and, at the same time, gives a very clear notion of what the dredge is like with which they were taken from the bed. The second picture represents the next



Photo. Dick. TAKING THE OYSTERS FROM THE SKIFF TO THE PIT.

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stage in the process of taking the oysters to the pit, taken at the moment at which they are about to be tilted in.

The brood oysters, still adhering to the shells, are tilted in about October, and there they stay till March, when man again begins to interfere with them. This time it is to sever their existence from that of the parent shell. He cuts them off with a knife, technically called a "cultack"; then both mothers and children are taken out in the skiff again, tilted into the river, and allowed to sink into the oyster-beds, that the former may produce more spat, and the latter may grow into promising young "half-ware." The process of SINGLING BROOD, as the cutting off of the young brood oyster from its parent shell is called, is well seen in the accompanying, the third, picture that illustrates this article. The comparatively advanced stage of life in which it is known as "half-ware" is not reached by the young oyster until it is three years old. It has then, for all practical purposes, arrived at maturity, is capable of becoming the mother of a flourishing young family, or of forming the basis for young brood oysters to attach themselves to and grow from. One always wonders what happened to the first young brood of oysters, when there was, presumably, only a very limited supply of parent shell for them to attach themselves upon; but no doubt this is going rather far back in the enquiry into the oyster's life history. At all events, there is no mistake about the size of its family—the brood is a prolific one. About 1,000,000 members is a fair, average family. The numbers seem appalling, but that which appals us most, when we consider how small a proportion of them can grow up to anything like maturity, is not the numbers so much as the reckless prodigality of Nature, who seems, in her care for the race, to show an utter disregard of the individual. Certain it is that, large as the absolute numbers of the oyster's family seem to be, they are none too large, considering the hosts of various enemies whose assaults they have to

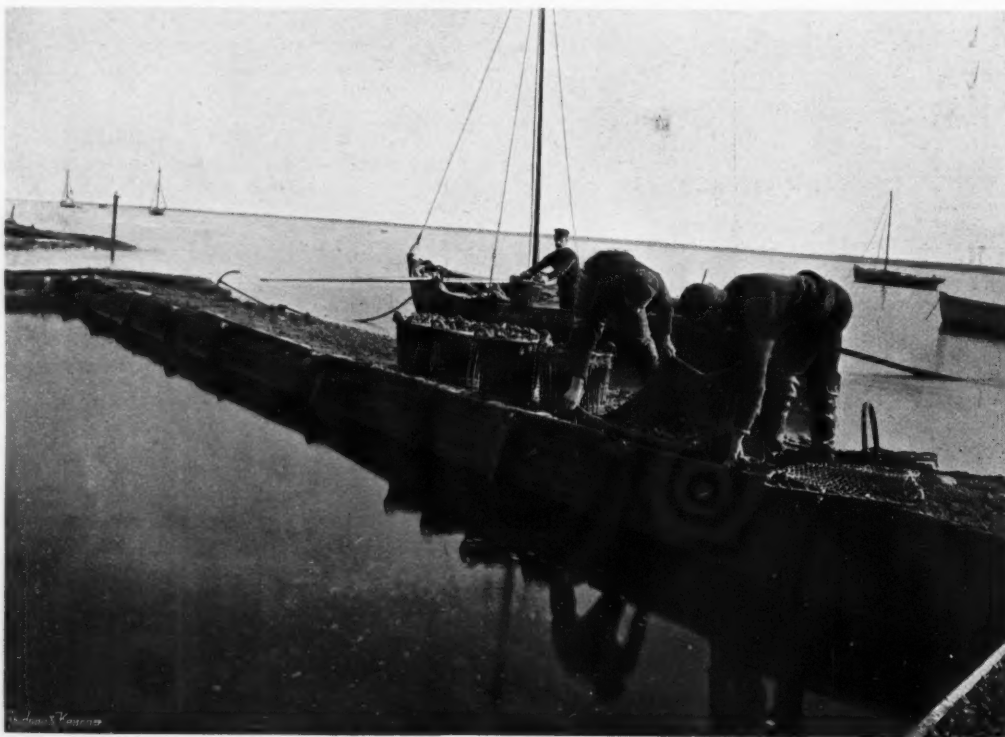


Photo. by J. W. Dick. THROWING THE OYSTERS INTO THE PIT

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survive. All the five year old oysters, that is to say, those that are fit for eating, stay in the pits until the market wants them; and it sometimes so happens that there is a certain market for them even before they reach the five year old stage of gastronomic maturity, for merchants will often buy immature oysters for the stocking of new beds or the replenishing of impoverished ones. But, truth to say, the market has not shown so zealous a need of oysters as the owners might wish during the last few years, in which the oyster has received so ill a name as a purveyor of typhoid fever. It is more than likely that in many a case the inoffensive oyster has incurred the blame when he was entirely guiltless; but his tribe is a living instance of Nature's maxim that the individual has to suffer for the sins of its kind—though it is possible that the oyster may not feel the painful indignity of being pronounced unsafe for human food as keenly as his owner feels the loss to his pocket. At any rate, it is quite certain that one may eat oysters without catching typhoid, and also that one may catch typhoid without eating oysters, as has been only too painfully in evidence lately at Maidstone and elsewhere.

The last illustration gives a view of a curious scoop, or "tendle" in the oyster catcher's language, with which the oysters are transferred to the baskets. The baskets, too, have a curious technical name, spelt, phonetically, "prithle." Beyond the phonetic spelling it is rather unsafe to venture in these technical terms, for with those who use the instruments they denote, orthography is something of a matter of private judgment, and the dictionary does not help.

Though the oysters become fit for eating at a common age



Photo. by J. W. Dick.

SINGLING BROOD.

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of five years old, they vary a deal in size. They are sold by the tub, and, of the largest, twelve hundred are reckoned to go to the tub. From this they go down in size in a decreasing scale, to fourteen hundred, sixteen hundred, eighteen hundred, twenty hundred, and, finally, twenty-one hundred to the tub.

In connection with this whole business of oyster culture, there is a deal more labour than might appear, or than is here mentioned. There is, of course, the preparation of the grits; that is no small business. Then, after the oysters have been dredged up, there is a deal to be done in the way of cleansing them, freeing them of mud, barnacles, seaweed, and so on, besides the carrying them to and fro the pits, and singling the brood oysters from the parent shells. A spell of rough weather will always give the oyster men plenty of work to do when it is over, in clearing the beds of the mud and wrack

that will have been washed over the oysters and the brood. This is done by means of harrows that are fastened to the dredges, and so dragged over the bed. And now and again a great lumbering barge, drawing next to no water, and caring not at all for being stuck on the mud for a tide or so, will come rasping over the bed at low water, and plough up great furrows with its clumsy keel—all which have to be raked smooth again to restore the bed to its symmetry.

On the whole, therefore, the oyster-tender's life is by no means an easy one. He has to work in all weathers, and most of his time is spent in a species of mudlarking, of which the latter end is very apt to be rheumatism. You may notice in the illustration how puffed out the men are about the legs with voluminous clothing, but not even the stoutest and warmest can insure them against the effects of the damp cold that pervades all the atmosphere of these low-lying estuaries.

HORACE HUTCHINSON.



Photo. by J. W. Dick.

A BASKETFUL.

Copyright.

CONCERNING BULLDOGS.

LADIES not addicted to the cult of the dog in every kind, and weak-kneed young men with an affectation of effeminacy which costs them little trouble, sometimes wonder why the breed of bulldogs continues to be maintained. "You cannot," they say, "bait bulls any longer"; which is true enough, and a matter not greatly to be regretted. Though Elizabeth and her Court rejoiced in bull-baiting at Hatfield—

imagine Lord Salisbury regaling the Queen by the spectacle of a bull-fight—it must have been a cruel business. "Nor," say the despisers of the bulldog, "can it be asserted that the bulldog is a beautiful sight," and it is to be feared that the counterfeit presentment of Mr. Wotherspoon of Wishaw's dog, which is my text, gives some appearance of colour to their milk and water argument.

He is most palpably and abominably strong, but in order to appreciate the lines of his beauty, he who looks upon him must judge him by the bulldog standard. But the unsympathetic critic, the kind of man who, mistaking rudeness for wit, describes as a cur a dog whose ancestry is longer and purer than his own, really speaks in gross ignorance, for there are a thousand reasons



Photo. by C. Reid.

A TYPICAL BULLDOG.

Copyright.

CANICULUS.

for encouraging the preservation of the true breed of bulldogs. In spite of their appearance, the percentage of savage and quarrelsome dogs amongst them is less than in most other breeds, and the true stories of their affection and faithfulness are without number. To me there is something almost touching in the clumsy but whole-hearted friendliness of the bulldog; and when I look at his honest, ugly face, I am not ashamed to be of a race which has accomplished great things by dint of bulldog courage. Excellent as a watchdog or a guard, slow to wrath and indomitable of heart, the bulldog is, it may almost be written, indispensable to the maintenance of high courage amongst other breeds. "Thus," wrote that high authority, Mr. Walsh, of the *Field*, "the most plucky greyhounds, foxhounds, mastiffs, and pointers, may all be traced to this source." Indeed, there is no more interesting chapter in the history of breeding than that in which Mr. Walsh traces the effect of introducing a bulldog cross into a highly-bred strain of greyhounds. All trace of the bulldog appearance was lost in the fourth generation; but the blood-red wine of courage remained, and, undoubtedly, improved the stamina of the breed.

BOOKS OF THE DAY.

IN "His Grace of Osmonde" (Frederick Warne) Mrs. Hodgson Burnett has returned to the theme of her successful novel, "A Lady of Quality." We have had "His Grace's Lady's Story" long ago, and it was pleasant in the reading; now we are presented with the parts of the history of His Grace's own life which were omitted in the earlier book. To be frank, this is not a good plan to be adopted by a novelist whose plots have the vivid strength which characterises Mrs. Hodgson Burnett's work and gives for itself a deep impression on the reader's mind. Every page of "His Grace of Osmonde" left upon me the feeling that somewhere, either in a magazine or in a previous state of existence, I had read the whole story before. Having said this much in dispraise, because candour compels my pen, let it be added at once and with pleasure that the book, regarded as a single work, is of the first order of merit, and that all the author's delicacy of portraiture, refinement in style, and power of construction have been exerted in it with lavish prodigality. His Grace is, perhaps, too perfect to be justified in human nature. "At three months he was as big and strong as an infant of half a year," and as a boy he was of wondrous beauty. His mind was as strong and beautiful as his body. "To set him to work upon a new branch of study is like setting a flame to brushwood. 'Tis as though he burned his way to that he would reach. He could leap, run, fence, shoot at a mark; there was no horse he could not ride; and at ten he stood as tall as a boy of fourteen, and was stalwart and graceful into the bargain." At Oxford and at Court, in Diplomacy and in Society, his career was brilliant and blameless. But for all His Grace's perfection, perhaps, indeed, because of it, a mere man cannot help loving Her Grace the better of the two. The growth of Clo Wildairs to beautiful and stately womanhood is described with infinite power and charm. In her wild youth, hunting in man's dress and masquerading as a boy, she is thus described: "The lad was in scarlet, and no youngster of the Court was more finely clad or fitted; and not one had Roxholm ever set eyes upon whose youthful body and limbs were as splendid in line and symmetry—in truth, the beauty and fire of him were things to make a man lose his breath." Later we see her as Lady Dunstanwolde. "The strange compellingness of her power, which was a thing itself apart from beauty, and would have ruled for her had she not possessed a single charm, had so increased that he felt himself change colour at the mere sight of her. 'Twas not the colour and height and regal shape of her which were her splendour, but this one heaven-born, unconquerable thing. Her lip seemed of a deeper scarlet, the full roundness of her throat rose from among her laces, bound with a slender circlet of glittering stars, her eyes had grown deeper and more melting, and yet held a great flame." There is a beautiful woman, painted in words by a clever woman; in other words, a picture of the most delightful and pleasant thing in existence. Other old friends and enemies we meet again in Nurse Halswell, and gentle mistress Anne, and rakish John Oxon, who is worsted in a duel by His Grace, and burly, honest Chris Crowell from Gloucestershire. In a word, the book, taken as one standing by itself and without reference to "A Lady of Quality," is of striking charm and interest.

Mr. Gleig has written, and Mr. John Lane has published, a strange but clever book, modelled upon the lines of the famous "Battle of Dorking," and entitled "When England Starved." It is the more easy to be amused by the book and to note with admiration its flashes of Carlylesque fire, in that the catastrophe which Mr. Gleig presumes is not in the least likely to occur. His imagination conjures up for our alarm naval alliance between France, Germany, and Russia against us. Of Italy he seems to have made no account. Even that alliance does not succeed in defeating our navy and putting an end to our commerce until several admirals have made many serious mistakes, and the officials at Gibraltar have permitted the treacherous and despised Maltese to

betray the island and several battleships to the enemy. So perhaps Englishmen may sleep peacefully in their beds, and go on building up their navy contentedly, in spite of Mr. Gleig's forebodings, for a few years to come; and for the alliance presumed is as improbable as a mixture of oil and water, and it will never be necessary for admirals and statesmen to make quite so many blunders as Mr. Gleig anticipates. It is the sequel, which can hardly be treated more seriously than Mr. Gleig's politics, that amuses. Mr. Gleig, it would seem, is at once a Protectionist and a wild Socialist. This is the future as he draws the curtain from it:—The navy being defeated, of course provisions fall short. Corn and meat go to famine prices, and are kept from the starving people by greedy merchants and landowners. Farmers are not mentioned, except as oppressed by impossible rents; but really, of course, the cattle would be in their hands. Among the hungry populace, John Burns—by the way, Mr. Gleig, in an ecstasy of wit, calls him Jim Scalds—agitates and makes violent speeches. The actual breaking out of the people occurs at Reading, the causes being the arrest of Jim Scalds, the shooting of a rioter who goes to the gaol to effect a rescue, and the fact that Messrs. Huntley and Palmer will not give up their great store of biscuits to allay the voracity of the multitude. All this, of course, is fundamentally and designedly silly. The pet word of woman is the only one that meets the situation. But the book is clever fooling, none the less, and, as the ragged mob marches on London in semi-military fashion, as it camps on Wimbledon Common, and as—this I should not expect—it vanquishes the whole police force of London on that classical battle ground, and, later on, when London is more or less sacked by the mob, the imaginary scenes are described with genuine power, and there is a wealth of vigour which call to mind the French Revolution as described by Thomas Carlyle. I recommend the book with cordial earnestness. The dangers which it anticipates are far enough removed from likelihood to be amusing in the reading, and the style and detail are distinctly clever.

Under the title of "Racing and Chasing," Messrs. Longmans have brought out a number of rattling stories from the race-course and the hunting-field, from the pen of that bright writer, Mr. A. E. T. Watson. Eighteen stories are here, all dedicated to Mr. H. B. McCalmont, in gratitude for opportunities of sport and pastime afforded to the writer, on land and sea, for several years past, by that excellent sportsman. A book of this kind cannot be swallowed at a single sitting, even by an enthusiastic admirer of the horse and of Mr. Watson. But it has merits and uses of a special kind. It can be kept at hand, ready to be opened at will, in the certain confidence that whatsoever story the reader may hit upon will prove to be instinct with life, and to be told by a thorough gentleman and sportsman who knows his business well. Stories which strike me as being particularly good are "Phyllis and Ophelia," in which the discomfiture of a so-called gentleman rider is recorded, and "A Good Day," in which the Major, then a novice, and ignorant that a "monkey" is £500, misunderstands a tip, takes six to one in monkeys against a horse fancied by nobody, and wins. He takes monkeys instead of ponies because he thinks monkeys are likely not to be so big as ponies.

"The Wrong Man," too, is a capital story of the humours of deer-stalking. Just imagine the feelings of a man asked by the illiterate keeper to read his host's letter to the said keeper. It ran: "The bearer of this is Mr. Wenhamston. Just let him see a stag. I don't want the place to be disturbed, and we don't want any venison just now for the house." Well—the reader did not convey this quite faithfully to the keeper, and there were other pleasant complications which completed the discomfiture of the churlish host. Mr. Watson's book, to sum it up, is as a very pleasant companion, who will talk at our bidding, and be silent when we please.

Those persons who have had the good fortune to happen upon Mrs. Humphry's "Manners for Women" (Bowden) will be the last to question the propriety of making mention of the work in this column. In the first place, it is written in easy and graceful style; in the second place, it is as far removed as the North Pole from the South from the vulgar and ignorant books concerning the etiquette of Society which have raised a thousand smiles and have provided the satirist with a subject time after time. As Mr. Watson knows the horse and the Turf, so Mrs. Humphry knows women and Society; and she writes of both in a mood of pleasant philosophy which makes her book pleasant in the reading, even to the male reader. Very wisely she does not emphasise unduly those formal rules as to "manners," unconscious obedience to which comes instinctively to the well-bred person, while the under-bred woman or man can never understand them. Her feeling, unless I misunderstand her, is that good breeding is an innate quality showing itself in that combination of modesty, ease, dignity, good temper and consideration for others which go to the making of that most precious product of civilisation—a lady. But the book, without entering upon precise rules of conduct, contains plenty of useful suggestions upon matters which even well-bred persons may be forgiven for not keeping constantly in mind. Also there are hints, by no means to be despised, as to the furnishing of various kinds of entertainments. But, to my mind, the charming feature of the book is its gentle sagacity and philosophy. It is the work of a clever woman, writing in genial sincerity upon a subject which has been her life's study. The chapters dealing with laughter, correspondence, and mourning, and the pleas advanced for greater simplicity in entertainment, strike me as being particularly good, not merely from the practical point of view, but as evidence that Mrs. Humphry understands thoroughly the essential nature of her sex; and, although our author is not quite free from a feminine prejudice against the horrid male in his capacity of husband, that ignoble person may learn from a perusal of her pleasant pages some real lessons as to the value of sympathetic behaviour towards the partner of his joys and sorrows.

Mr. Nicholson's illustrations render the "Almanac of Twelve Sports" (Heinemann) more than worth buying. His horses and dogs are delightful, and there is great wealth of humour in the bold strokes and splashes of colour which go to the making of his men. Of all the gallery of pictures it is necessary to speak in terms of joyous appreciation; but, if I may single out one or two, they shall be the bare-legged, Leander-capped "coach," mounted on his rocking horse, addressing winged words to a Varsity crew, which signifies April, the glove-fight that stands for November, and the greyhounds stretched out in full course which mark February. But with regard to the verses, I must make a shame-faced confession. They are from the pen of no less a person than Mr. Rudyard Kipling, but as I read them an unsatisfied feeling compelled a frequent reference to the title page. They are not by any means in that robust singer's best manner. For example:

"Give me a willow wand and I,
With hide and cork and twine,
From century to century
Will gambol round my shrine"

is, to be candid, poor stuff. But the racing quatrain has the old and shrewd ring:

"The horse is ridden—the jockey rides—
The backers back—the owners own,
But—there are lots of things besides,
And I should leave this play alone."

Young men who imagine that they have an eye for a horse—which is a very costly kind of eye—are recommended to have these words framed and to hang them about their paths and about their beds.

In spite of a frank admiration for the workmanship of Mr. F. Marion Crawford, an admiration intensified by "Corleone" (Macmillan), a very few lines will serve to enable me to express my opinion of this enthralling book. To secure full enjoyment the volumes must be read at least twice. So fierce is the interest with which the reader follows the love-story of Orsino and Vittoria, so keen is his excitement in the adventures of Orsino, Ippolito the priest, and San Giacinto, in brigand-haunted Sicily, that at the first reading he is apt to skip whole pages of delicate psychology in his eager desire to pursue the impetuous course of the action. "Can these things be?" he exclaims to himself, as he reads of the *mafia* of the Sicilians, of the boldness of the outlaws, of many murders, and many fierce fights. The whole course of events is described in so natural and vivid a tone, that the story seems, at any rate, to be true. The *mafia*, a feeling rather than an organisation, a feeling which induces Sicilians never to betray Sicilians, whatsoever their crimes may be, a feeling which has its manifestation in the ruthless torture of all who are traitors to the distorted Sicilian ideal, gives *vraisemblance* to many horrible deeds. It seems quite natural, in presence of the *mafia*, that Ferdinando Pagliuca, a Sicilian gentleman, should be in alliance with the brigands, that he should lie in wait to shoot the Roman to whom, reluctantly it is true, he has sold his share in the ancestral estate; equally does it seem a matter of course that Tebaldo, the villainous elder brother of Ferdinando, should murder another brother, Francesco, for interfering in his love affairs, and betraying his infidelity to his mistress. Tebaldo is a masterpiece of hardihood and wickedness. He murders his brother; he seals by confession the lips of the priest Ippolito, who all but saw him commit the deed; he accuses the priest of the murder, and finally he betrays his allies, the outlaws, to the carabinieri. Then one goes back with quiet enjoyment to elaborate and graceful refinements of psychology, a terrifying word, which covers much delicate, truthful, and interesting writing. A wonderful mixture is this book, but it must be read twice to be appreciated; it is, therefore, worth two books.

MIXED DAYS.

LET me approach these three pictures—pictures which bring back to me the memory of a hundred pleasant days in the rain and the sun—in the spirit of the late lamented Sherlock Holmes, and compel them to tell their own story. To this end no magic art is required, for the little indications, the game which is absent no less than that which is present, the appearance of the trees fringing the ride along which those sturdy lads are carrying the first instalment home, and even the shattered hindquarters of the hare hanging from the little boy's shoulder—somebody forgot to think of his ears—and the neatly-built dry wall and bare upland of the last picture, tell their own story to him who has eyes to see and intelligence to read the signs of the country. The scene is clearly laid in the North Country, either on the hither or the more remote side of Tweed—the latter for choice. The ground lies high—witness the stunted growth of the trees, and the signs which they show of the sweeping force of an endless series of storms from the wild south-west. I feel sure that when those lads have trudged a rather hundred yards or so they will see the edge of covert stretching away to their right rear, and that the outward rampart of trees, faced, perhaps, by a low stone wall, which gave shelter against the stormy blast to them in seedling days, has been shorn by the wind as neatly as a hedge by the shears of a gardener, and slopes upward as regularly as the roof of a penthouse until the height of the covert in general, itself far from great, is reached. The signs are there, plainly to be construed. The very trunks lean over, with here and there an exception, from the south-west; and though some leading branches have so far escaped destruction



Photo. by C. Reid.

ON GUARD.

Copyright.

near the central parts of the covert, that beech with the snapped leader shoot and its mangled branches tell their own tale. The outer edge of the covert is, I suspect, of stunted and lichen-bearing blackthorns, between which and the wall are many runs and almost impenetrable hiding-places of bird and beast.

But our sportsmen, as all the pictures show, have not been employed inside the coverts to speak of; most likely, indeed, they have not entered them at all. The season of the year is the very end of chill October, or of dreary dark November—an urban phrase is this last, and by no means applicable to the cool sunshine and the windless weather which have caused men who live in the fields to reckon the late days of October and the early

days of November in this year of grace worthy to be counted days of paradise. Pheasants had been food for powder for some weeks, so far as the law went, when our friends sallied forth in the morning; but the day of wrath and slaughter had not come, the "big shoot" of the pheasants was yet in the future, when they started with the keeper and his wise retriever, and with the keeper's two sturdy sons, intent on making themselves generally useful.

Cherished memories make me tender of heart towards the keeper's son. English, Scotch, or Welsh, he is intimately familiar with the ways of bird or beast; he knows the tussocks in the moorland and the craggy knolls, wild mixture of rock and whin and heather—in both of which the timid but lusty hare is wont to lie; he has noted the flight of birds, and he marks to a miracle; and marking is an accomplishment in which a sharp boy will often excel the man of mature experience. The first picture, obviously taken when luncheon suggested itself, argues that our friends have enjoyed fair and varied sport; for the variety of the mixed day, its abundant fruitfulness in the shots that are unexpected and cannot be foreseen, give it its chief charm.

You never know whether you ought not to have a No. 8 cartridge in your first barrel, and a No. 5, or even No. 4, in the second, for maybe a snipe will rise with a "scape" and corkscrew flight, or perhaps one or two of the wary plover that fly crying over the moorland may stray within shot; but you must be prepared to shoot quickly, and at long ranges, to secure the grouse or the partridge that will rise wild and fly with amazing strength. A moment's hesitation and you are lost; at least, the bird is.

For my own part, I always use either No. 6 or No. 5 consistently for these mixed days, for it is troublesome to be forever thinking of the contents of the respective cylinders, and better effects come from keeping constantly in mind the fact that the effective stream of shot is long, and that to one miss in front there are probably nine or even nineteen behind. Some very interesting experiments on this point have lately been made, with the result of showing, if memory serves me correctly, that the stream of shot at forty yards is something like twenty feet in length, and the effective part of it fully eight feet. Of a truth, the hindquarters of the nearest hare in the heap which the retriever is watching, and of the same hare as it hangs from the boy's shoulders, induce me to insist on this point, for many a three-legged hare—not so fortunate as this one, which fell to a second barrel, or to another gun—has travelled an astonishing distance in its agony, to die a lingering death, and that to no purpose, in the wilderness of heather. "Think of his ears" is an old rule, but it is golden; and it must not be forgotten that a hare, even if mortally wounded, will often run with apparent strength for some hundreds of yards, and then fall suddenly stone dead.

The bag up to luncheon consists of three well-grown hares, some partridges, some grouse, a plover, and a rabbit, which the keeper forgot to expose for portraiture; but when the time came



Phot., by C. Reid.

GOING HOME.

Copyright.

for Sandy and wee Donald to carry home the first instalment the canny father by no means forgot to relieve himself of the unnecessary weight. Then on the little party fared, to make the best of the short afternoon, and the cartridge bags grew lighter as three more hares, and a very tidy lot of grouse and partridges, were added to the load which the keeper had to carry. Of that feeble folk, the conies, there is but one specimen; but little can be argued from that. Perhaps the influence of Sir William Harcourt's Act has been felt, and bunnies are scarce; perhaps they have receded before the hares, for one seldom finds hares and rabbits flourishing together; or perhaps the sportsmen spared them, since they had plenty of higher game to shoot at. And now the autumn sun is failing fast—you can hardly distinguish between a lump of thistles and a sitting rabbit at thirty yards—

distances become hard to calculate. Before the last rays are gone let the afternoon's booty be piled together. Let the hares and rabbit be suspended from the battered barbed wire fence. Let the guns, one an under-lever, and even the other hammer-bearing, and the birds piled up beneath plead that considerable execution may be done, and much pleasure may be gained, even by those who use weapons not of the newest fashion; and let the cartridge bag, which once held many neat pink cases of potential death in portable shape, form a bier upon which the tawny long-billed woodcock, the first, it may be, of the season, may lie in state. Yes; there is no end to the delights of a mixed day in a wild country, and there is no reason in life why our friends should not have as much variety in their bag another day. For I see no mallard or duck, no widgeon, no teal, no pheasants, and no great store of plover. But the shooting of green plover is a business by itself, of which I may tell something another day

AUCEPS.



Photo. by C. Reid.

THE BAG.

Copyright.

CHARCOAL BURNING.

THE accompanying photographs illustrate the industry of charcoal burning, or coaling, as it is termed locally, as carried on at the present day in Westmoreland, and in other parts of England with minor differences.

To anyone seeing the process for the first time, the means employed seem very primitive indeed compared with what one would expect to see at the latter end of this century of invention and scientific procedure, but, nevertheless, the results seem amply to justify the means employed.

The scene of action a few months ago was a thick plantation of young ash and oak, and the first men to appear on the scene were the wood-cutters, mostly local men, who cut down all the trees but a few yews. The young trees are stripped of their branches, and laid in heaps conveniently for carting; but with those that are carted away it is not our purpose to deal here. Those intended for charcoal, principally oak, varying in thickness from 1in. to 2½in. or 3in., mostly the former, are put aside, cut into lengths of about 2ft., and the bark peeled off. This latter is tied up into bundles and carted off, and the short sticks are made into heaps, all being regularly laid side by side, sometimes in a semi-circle, layer upon layer, to a height of 2ft. or 3ft., heaps being made up all about the ground, wherever the sticks happen to be, and which heaps remain untouched until the advent of the charcoal men.

The first business of these men is to build themselves a cabin or cabins, which they do by driving into the ground a number of stout poles 6ft. or 8ft. long in a circle some 10ft. in diameter. The tops are then all drawn together to a point and fastened, and then the outside is covered with sods cut from the vicinity. These are kept from slipping down by other poles, and the apex is covered by some more or less ornamental and waterproof article—in this case an old lard tin surmounted by a stone. The opening for egress and ingress is some 2ft. wide at bottom, and tapers to nothing at a height of 3ft. from the ground. At night, or when the tenant wishes for privacy, a sack with a pole either side serves the purpose of a door. Furniture there seems to be none, and so far as the writer has been able to ascertain, the occupants sleep on sacks spread upon leaves or bracken. The cooking utensils consist of a frying-pan and a kettle,

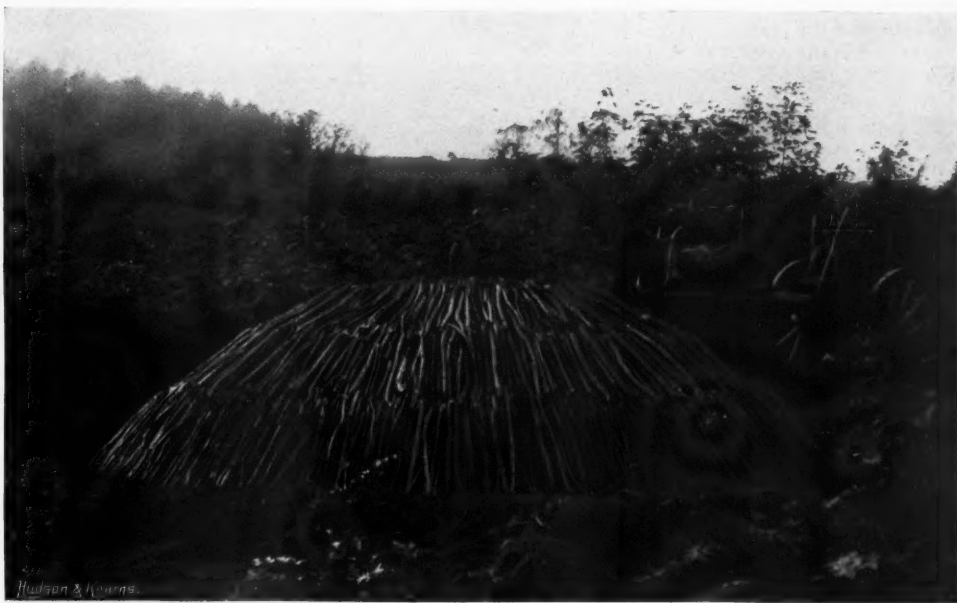


Photo. by F. Crosland.

LAYING THE STICKS.

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which are slung over a fire outside, in regular gipsy fashion. Soap does not seem to form part of the impedimenta, or, if so, does not come to the front much so far as its results are concerned, though it must be acknowledged that it would be very difficult to maintain even a semblance of cleanness amid the fumes and smoke emanating from the half-burnt wood. The smoke also possesses a most penetrating odour, tarry or creosoty in character, which seems to permeate everything, and can be smelt a mile or more away from the scene of action. When the colliers have finished in a wood, they just take their clothes, sacks, spades, and other implements, leave their late abodes to the mercy of the weather, and build others in their fresh locality. In the case of the cabins illustrated, three men slept or lived in one, and two in the other. At night one man is always on duty to attend to the fires, which duty is taken by turns.

To pass on to their work. They start by clearing and levelling a circular space some 20ft. in diameter, and then in the centre put a long oak pole, leaning against which the short oak or other sticks intended for charcoal are stood on end, all leaning towards the centre, and so arranged until a circle of some 16ft. diameter is covered. Above this another layer, still on end, is put, and so on, layer above layer, till a height of 6ft. or so is attained, and the heap assumes the appearance presented in the photo. It is then ready to be covered in, which is done by

means of rushes and then a covering of earth, leaving a circular small opening in the centre on top. The appearance then resembles a huge mole-hill, and its size may be judged by the photo showing the man on top. This has just been lit, an operation which seems to be guarded from the outsider's investigation, but, however, the pile is lighted from the top. The fire gradually travels downwards and outwards, extending to the edges. A little air is allowed to enter at the bottom, just sufficient to support combustion; and in regulating this, keeping the fire going evenly, and not allowing it to get too hot or burn too quickly, the art of charcoal burning principally consists. Strong winds are the great enemy the collier has to deal with, and to protect the pits from the baneful effects of such, great shields are made of hurdles covered with bracken and gorse, which are put up on the windward side of the pits, as the heaps are termed. These are well shown in two of the photographs.

A pit takes on an average two days to burn through. They have to be constantly watched



Photo. by F. Crosland.

IN THE FIRST STAGE.

Copyright.

night and day, Sunday and week-day, to see that the fire does not break through the covering and so obtain more air than is necessary to volatilise the gases and water contained in the wood, the process requiring considerable judgment on the part of the foreman. When the stage is reached at which it is desirable to discontinue the fire, the men extinguish it by covering it with earth, which they carry on their shoulders in baskets such as are shown in the photo, which earth is passed through a sieve, and also by the use of a fair amount of water. It is then left to cool, which takes a day or so, after which the rubbish and *débris* are removed, and the sticks of charcoal, which still retain their natural form, are put into huge sacks and carted off to the nearest station, or other receiving place, on a two-wheeled vehicle, as seen behind the pile of wood in the photo. In the burning, or carbonising, operation, the wood loses about forty per cent. in bulk, and eighty per cent. in weight, the former of which facts accounts for the diminished height of the pit in the photo where the men are just ready to commence extinguishing operations, as compared with the one just newly lighted, with the collier on top.

The finished article goes to various centres for smelting, for use in laundries, and to some extent as fuel for household purposes. With regard to pay the men are somewhat reticent, but they assured the writer that wages are 8s. to 10s. a week less than they were in the good old days of long ago. Presumably the



Photo. by F. Crosland.

FINISHED.

Copyright.

process dates back to almost prehistoric times, and is one of the few remaining industries which have not, so far, succumbed to the onward march of knowledge. To the lover of the picturesque and old-world ways, a few hours spent with the charcoal burners—whom the writer has found to be most extremely good fellows—will amply repay the little annoyances in the shape of wood fumes one has to put up with.

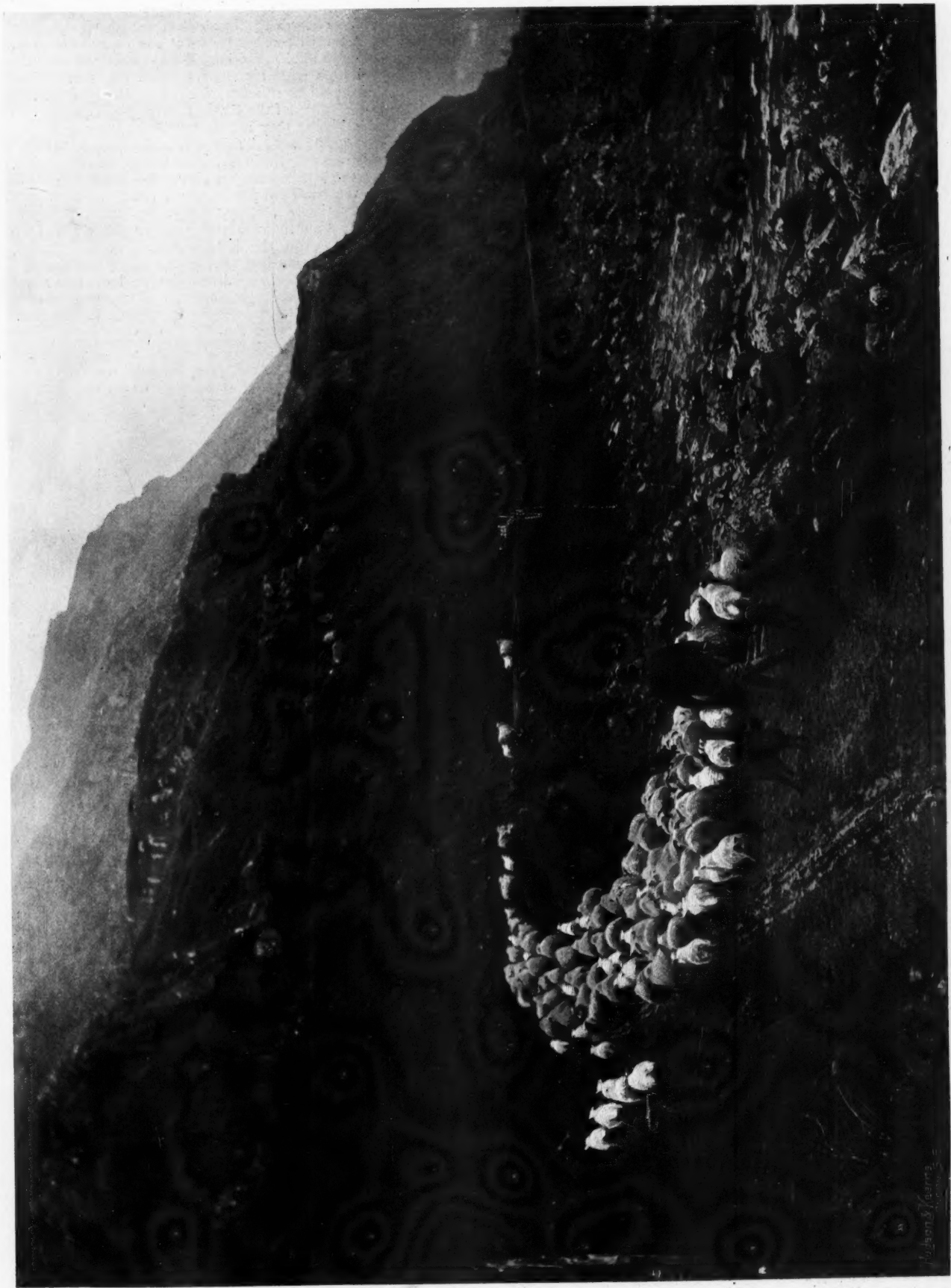
PILGRIM SHEEP.

"They went on till they came to the Delectable Mountains. Now there were on the tops of those mountains shepherds feeding their flocks."

THE pilgrimages of the birds which travel thousands of miles yearly to rear the young in better surroundings, or in some ancient environment of their species, are rarely imitated by the larger animals. The only motives which quadrupeds have for such wanderings, are either want of food, or the avoidance of extreme heat or intolerable cold. Sometimes the two last conditions occur almost in the same latitude. The heat and mosquito swarms of the Tundra in the Arctic summer drive the reindeer up into the mountains, while the desperate cold of the winter of Arctic America above latitude 60deg. drives the musk-ox herds from the region of treeless swamp to the fringe of forests. Such migrations were common among the bison herds, and reach their climax in the vast food-migrations of the spring-bucks on the South African veldt. From the spring-bucks we can hardly find another migrating species until we come to the tiny lemmings, with one notable exception—the tame, dependent, and intensely domesticated sheep. The pilgrimages of sheep fall under the head of food-migrations. Now these, in a state of Nature, are only practised by quadrupeds which live in large herds or societies, because where the number of individuals is greatest the means of subsistence fails most quickly and "shortage" is soonest felt. The migration of the artificially multiplied flocks of sheep is due to exactly the same reasons, and we shall show later how, in spite of extraordinary efforts to combat the artificial propagation of the sheep by the artificial propagation of food, noted in a recent number of COUNTRY LIFE, these food-migrations are still practised by the flocks of Scotland, and even of England, often by rail and by steamer, no less than by those of the wild Albanians and Pomaks, or the vast numbers of merino sheep in Spain. Taking the latter as illustrating the migrations of sheep in countries midway between the civilisation of modern Thrace and modern Scotland, we find the following extraordinary system prevailing in the management of flocks. Some years ago it was calculated that there were at least ten millions of pure merino sheep in Spain, and that of these millions all but the flocks of Leon and Estremadura perform vast food-migrations yearly. "Transhumantes" is the name for these wandering sheep, which migrate every winter from the mountains of the north to the plains of the south, and back again every spring from the plains to the mountains. Each flock, often of several thousands in number, is under the care of a mayoral, a head shepherd, and assistant shepherds. These are the commander-in-chief and

brigadiers of the army; but the whole community perfectly understand one another, and take their place in the march, the order being as follows. The human contingent—mayorals, shepherds, and boys—lead, and settle the route and distance of the march. The sheep follow, but with non-commissioned officers in the form of experienced wethers, who keep close to the mayoral. The dogs scout and act as convoy. These dogs are not collies, to drive the sheep, but fierce mastiffs, to fight the wolves, otter dogs, or sheep stealers. Lastly, mules transport the hurdles for making up a fold every night. Is not this a complete and interesting chapter of the "induced conditions of animal life"? The length of these migrations is great. Four hundred miles are covered on an average. The time taken is seven weeks; so that in going and returning three and a-half months are spent by the flocks in actual migration. The damage done is great, partly illegally, partly by very ancient law and custom, which secures a right of feed by the wayside. The code of sheep laws is called the "Mesta," and is as old as the fourteenth century. It settles disputes and claims, and watches over the interests of the shepherds rather than of those through whose land the predatory sheep pass. Some of the rules are reflected in old survivals in our own country. A path ninety yards wide had to be left through enclosed country, for the sheep to graze, and all commons were to be open to the flocks. This is part of the origin of our grassy roadsides, especially on the downs, and of the commons used as camping grounds for travelling cattle—a privilege now denied even to the poor gipsies. At one time no one was permitted to travel on these tracks when the sheep were migrating, either in spring or autumn, and at all times the damage done to the enclosures is considerable. Wool, not mutton, is the object of the Spanish flock owners, who believe that the migratory system increases the yield of wool.

The most rude, ancient, and violent form of shepherding still practised in Europe is that which has for ages obtained in Turkey, Bulgaria, Eastern Roumelia, and parts of Macedonia. The ancient Thrace and Macedon are perhaps names more germane to the business, though it is doubtful if sheep and shepherds could have lived on these mountains in the very early days, when the lions were so thick north of Olympus that they killed off Xerxes' baggage animals. The shepherds are mainly of the Pomak race, a particularly savage tribe of Moslem Bulgars. These people feed their sheep in summer on the chain of the Rhodope Mountains, which they follow along its length almost into Servia, migrating in the autumn to the lowlands. The shepherds are armed and



PILGRIM SHEEP: THE HILL OF DIFFICULTY.

Photo. by C. Reid.

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have all the warlike and truculent bearing of their neighbours, the Arnauts. Their dogs are huge shaggy mastiffs, used as protectors of the flock, like those of Spain, but far fiercer, and equally hostile to man as to beast, for man on the Rhodope as often as not has designs on the flocks or the lives of these most ungentle shepherds. Three hundred miles mark the extreme limits of the Rhodope sheep's migrations. Sanguinary fights between the Moslem and so-called Christian shepherds, for infringing on ground occupied by rival flocks, are common enough; and, as among the shepherds of Albania, the dogs make travelling anywhere in their neighbourhood a matter of danger and discomfort.

The social results of this migratory system of shepherding are unexpected, retrograde, and a total reversion of the accepted theory that the adoption of the pastoral life marks an advance in national well-being. The theory is absolutely true as referring to the maintenance of stationary flocks. These are the pledge of settled and peaceful occupation. Migratory sheep are, in rude societies, enemies of all settled occupation. Almost the first persons to suffer are the peaceable owners of stationary flocks, whose fields and pastures are invaded by the wanderers. The peaceful shepherd with his crook and sheepdog is transformed into the armed shepherd with his gun and truculent mastiff, the friend and "comforter" of brigands, and ready to turn brigand

himself. Even his dog is credited with this occasional lapse from honesty—"Quatorze brigands furent tués," writes Edmond About, bitterly, "*dont un chien.*"

In the now law-abiding Highlands, enormous numbers of sheep migrate every year to and from the hills and the Lowlands, without hardship to other flock owners, and with great benefit to themselves. Though the hardy heather sheep can live out on the hills all the winter, the lambs of the year are usually sent southwards for the cold months. Many farms would be quite overstocked if this were not done. From the islands they are sent to the mainland by steamer, and flocks from Jura or Mull go to winter in the valley of the Clyde, near smoky Glasgow. From the North Highlands they are driven by road, or even sent by rail, to winter southwards. Train after train, filled with migrating sheep, may be seen on the Highland railway. Next year in the spring they set their faces north again, and soon the pilgrim sheep, after scaling the southern passes, wend their way up THE HILL OF DIFFICULTY, barren, steep, stony, and rock-strewn with fragments burst from the cold east shoulder of the hills by frost, to their old home on the hills. Once over the passes, the happy sheep find themselves among the sunny heather of THE DELECTABLE MOUNTAINS, and live happily all the summer long among the mosses, sweet grasses, and falling waters of their native moors.

C. J. CORNISH.



Photo. by C. Reid.

THE DELECTABLE MOUNTAINS.

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THE FIRST PARTRIDGE DRIVE OF THE SEASON.

EVEN in October partridges in the Northern Counties are too wild to lie to dogs or to be walked up, and driving has to be resorted to, if a fair bag is to be obtained. Great as are the pleasures of grouse driving, we always look forward with pleasurable anticipation to the first partridge drive of the season. The sport takes place amidst charming surroundings, there is an interest in watching the rural labourers at their varied occupations, whilst the calm, home-like scenery of the arable country has special attractions of its own. In the early morning the birds are feeding on the stubbles and in the seed fields, and as we drive along the hedge-bordered country roads we see coveys here and there of the little brown birds, with a few pheasants also feeding near the edge of the coverts. How quietly and slowly the birds squat, as we pull up for a moment to get a light for the pipe. They appear to sink almost out of sight as they crouch close to the brown earth, with which their plumage so closely assimilates as to make them indistinguishable, except to the practised eye. The air is calm, a few leaves, sere and yellow, still cling to the trees that stud the hedgerows, here and there an oak stands out boldly with its russet-tinted shrivelled foliage, and the dark brown keys of the ash sway gently as they are

stirred by a slight puff of wind. The hedgerows are glistening with the dew that decks each twig and each stem of decaying vegetation. Innumerable cobwebs are hanging to the brushwood, the thin delicate films, fair and fragile as a woman's promise, being also dew laden and pearly grey in tint. At intervals the crimson berries of the holly or the coral-tinted haws of the briar afford a brilliant touch of colour. All Nature seems dying—the grasses are white and withered, the ferns and bracken brown and soiled, whilst only the glossy green of the hollies or the lingering foliage of the brambles relieve the monotonous sombre tints.

On our arrival we find the other guns in readiness, and at once walk across a couple of fields to the hedge, behind which we take up our positions for the first drive. The beaters have already been sent round, ready to start on hearing the keeper's whistle. The stubbles have been previously walked by the beaters, and the birds driven into a large field of turnips in front of us. Almost as soon as the whistle is sounded we hear shouts of "turn 'em up on the left," and then a shout of "mark over," and a big covey swing over the corner gun, who, however, fails to score. A good many pheasants also come over us, but as these

are on their way to the home coverts they are not fired at; several hares dash past, and some break back, but these also escape scot free here. One lot of partridges come over the centre of the line, and three are killed, another going away hard hit; a covey rise and break back, two odd birds dash over and are killed, and then a big lot of thirty or forty birds face the guns. A rabbit bolts through the hedge and is killed, an old cock pheasant is flushed as the beaters reach the hedge, and the first drive is over. We pick up eight birds and a rabbit, and then saunter slowly across to the next hedge, as the men are sent round to endeavour to bring the birds back to their accustomed ground. We have a longish wait, and, whilst the blue smoke from the cigarette floats slowly upwards, we sit on the shooting-stick and admire the glorious country around us.

The sombre hues of a pine plantation on the hillside, with the serrated line of the trees, stand out clearly against the grey sky. In the far distance, the brown moorland stretches away for miles, until it blends with the horizon. A faint grey mist hangs over the valley, where we catch occasional glimpses of the winding river. A ploughman is busy turning up long ridges of moist glistening brown earth; the sound of his cheery voice as he turns his horses at the headland comes floating to our ears, mellowed by the distance. Broad bands of shimmering yellow are bounded by thin strips of newly-ploughed land, and the winter-sown wheat, which is now sprouting above the surface, is gleaming green in the faint sunlight. Close at hand, men—aye, and women, too—are at work "snagging" turnips, and in a corner of the field the shepherd is busy amongst his penned sheep. Circular, dome-shaped, earth-covered mounds are dotted about the field, these being the "pies" in which the turnips are stored for winter use.

But now the beaters appear in the distance, the light glancing on their flags as they approach. Birds get up in coveys, some coming over the guns, others breaking away between the flank man, who is too far forward, and the next beater. A flock of golden plover, disturbed in the big pastures, come circling overhead, and three fall as four barrels are emptied at them. More partridges come over the guns, one covey pitch just in front, and, of course, break back, as they invariably do under similar circumstances, when the beaters approach.

Two winged birds give the dogs considerable trouble, as scent is bad, but both are at last found and added to the bag. Then we walk in line across a turnip-field and two fallow fields, but birds rise far out of shot, and only two rabbits are killed. Taking up our positions behind a high blackthorn hedge, we wait for the next drive, and here birds come over very high, affording splendid rocketing shots. Here, too, we shoot both hares and pheasants, as we are near the boundary, and the neighbouring lessee spares neither hares nor hen pheasants. This is the best drive of the day. Birds are plentiful, and come well over the guns, so that when the drive is over, nine brace of partridges, six pheasants, and four hares are added to the bag. The game-cart is called up, and, selecting a sheltered, sunny spot, luncheon is quickly partaken of, and sport resumed. Twenty-one brace of partridges before luncheon for three guns is an excellent bag on this manor, and we at least are satisfied.

The other drives are similar to those before luncheon, and as the afternoon advances a grey haze settles over the country, warning us that the day will soon be ended. One more drive, and we stand silent in the quiet hush of the approaching eventide, with the droning hum of a steam thrasher, at work at an adjoining farm, rising and falling as the sound is borne to our ears. The sharp bark of a sheepdog, and the lowing of cattle, break the drowsy silence, until once more we hear the voices of the beaters as they clamber over a fence on the sky-line. A hare comes lobbing along, stopping ever and anon to listen, and then, with ears laid close to her back, she dashes across the corner of the field and is bowled over, her piteous cries being added to the other sounds of rural life. A covey of partridges are flushed, but, flying low against the brown soil, we do not see them until they top the hedge, and the three hurried shots only result in killing one bird. Other coveys are flushed, but do not face the guns, and the crow of pheasants going to roost in the home coverts warns us that our sport for the day is at an end. The beaters come up, the birds are collected, game-bags emptied out, and the contents of the game-cart thrown out and placed in line on the grassy side of the road, where the head keeper, taking a stick from one of the beaters, counts over the game—forty brace of partridges, twelve pheasants, ten hares, nine rabbits, and a pigeon being the total results of my first partridge drive of the season.

LEYBURN.

THE KENNEL.

FOR close on half a century, the Barcrofts of Scoutmoor, Bury, Lancashire, have been famous as breeders of Sheepdogs for work pure and simple, and since the institution of Sheepdog trials, no family has gained greater success. At Tring, in the early autumn, Southerners were given an opportunity of witnessing the marvellous powers of these pedigreeless animals, a photo of one of which accompanies this article. This is WHITE BOB, who, in the spring, secured the medal of the German Collie Club, for brilliant work at the Frankfurt-on-the-Maine trials, the first ever held in Germany. He also had the honour of appearing before the Queen on the occasion of a Royal visit to the Llangollen trials some years ago. His work at Tring, as noted at the time in COUNTRY LIFE, was brilliant in the extreme, and, although beaten by a younger dog, he gave evidence of intelligence the like of which is seldom seen even in a species supposed to be possessed of more than an ordinary share. Mr. Barcroft has absolutely perfect control over him, and his method of working the dog and the sheep can be seen by the subjoined photo, taken at Frankfurt on the occasion of the trials previously named. Bob, who is scarcely distinguishable in the long grass, is patiently waiting the "get to 'em, laad" from his owner, the signal to approach closer and drive his sheep through the hurdles placed as one of the obstacles.

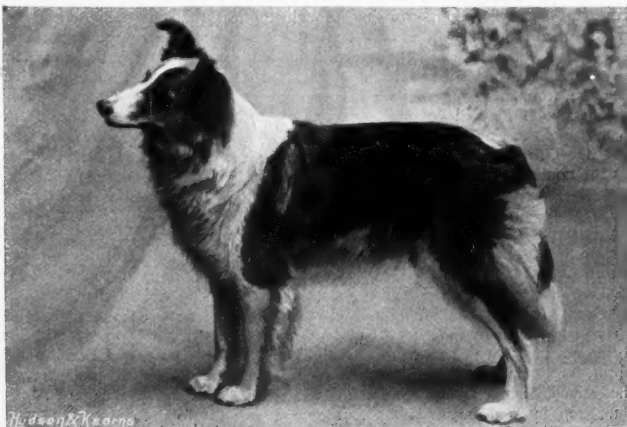
As a contrast to White Bob, the hero of scores of Sheepdog trials, Mr. J. Locke's prize Collie, LOVE LETTER, is worthy of note. Her owner, a highly-popular Border country fancier, judged the variety at the recent show of the Kennel Club held at the Crystal Palace, or Londoners would have had an opportunity of noticing how much she had improved since her appearance twelve months previously, when she won the Collie Club Oaks. Since then she has been shown with very great success at Sunderland, Galashiels, Hawick, Kelsö, Selkirk, and Bournemouth, her appearance at the latter fixture in August last creating



WHITE BOB.

quite a furore among South Country breeders. No fewer than three firsts and two specials here fell to her share. In colour she is a lovely light sable and white, nicely marked, and she has almost perfect ear carriage. She is very racily set up, and is one of the best show dogs ever seen south of the Tweed. As a matter of fact, she requires very little attention when in the ring, a word from her owner being quite sufficient. Her pedigree, Champion Portington Bar None—Lynwood Lilian, proves her possession of the bluest blood, and Mr. Locke, who bred her, is justly proud of his pretty Collie.

A variety now very seldom heard of is the Old English Terrier, undoubtedly due to its very great resemblance to its close neighbour the Welsh Terrier. A story is indeed told of a dog proving a failure in the ring as an Old English Terrier and being afterwards shown under the same judges as one of the Welsh variety. When told that it was getting a trifle big to be successful as a representative of the Principality, the owner coolly retorted that he knew where he could "plant" it as an Airedale. This illustrates very aptly how many of the less popular breeds are manufactured. The dogs are faked until scarcely recognisable, and then sold as specimens of quite a different variety to some unsuspecting fancier. That the Old English Terrier is a distinct breed is unquestionable, and up to recently very passable specimens were occasionally to be seen benched at many leading shows. One of these, BOUGHTON CURIO, is the joint property of Messrs. Percy Roberts and Alfred Blain, of Chester. He is described as being as hard as nails, and one of the gamest Terriers living. A son of his, Roger, bred by Mr. Roberts, was sent out to India to Mr. Lionel Jacobs, a Government servant,



J. E. D. Murray,

LOVE LETTER.

Hawick.



C. W. Webster,

BOUGHTON CURIO.

Chester.

who valued him very highly, one of his exploits being the killing of a wild cat single-handed. Contention, another of the variety in Mr. Roberts's kennel, is dead game, and, with Curio, has won many prizes on the bench. It is, indeed, a great pity that such a variety is not made more of a public favourite. It has everything in its favour, being game, good-looking, and a splendid companion during a sporting expedition.

DIANE, the brindled French Bull-terrier whose portrait is given herewith, is the property of Mrs. Hames, who prizes her favourite for her symmetrical lines, shapely figure, and for her supremely affectionate disposition. Diane was a prize-winner in France previous to being presented to Mrs. Hames by the late Sir Everett Millais, but she has never competed at any dog show in England since her importation. She is five years old, very quiet and well-mannered, and does many tricks—in fact, her mistress says “she can be taught to do anything.”



Photo. by A. Ellis,

DIANE.

Upper Baker Street.

THE success of the inaugural show at Canterbury, last week, was most encouraging to the promoters. During the two days the Kent County Pavilion was visited by large crowds, and, although competition was confined to South Country breeders, very many well-known animals were benched. Mrs. Clarke, of Hythe, a most enthusiastic fancier, who supports almost every Southern show, was very successful in Bulldogs, whilst Mrs. Downes, another lover of the dog, had quite a string of Greyhounds on show.

Her crack, Heterodox, a good performer in the field, secured the silver cup—singularly enough, offered by Riding-Master Downes, her husband—put up for the best local exhibit, whilst Curiosity and Daggers Drawn, two other coursing-looking longtails, also added to the store of prizes already won by the representatives of the Havelock kennel. None of the remaining classes were at all notable, Collies, in fact, being so poor that first prizes in both classes were withheld. Mr. Lukey, J.P., at one time connected with the County Hotel, well remembered by visitors to the annual cricket carnival, is president of the society, which bids fair to be one of the most powerful in the lovely county of Kent.

The annual show of the Northern and Midland Sheepdog Club, second in popularity among breeders to that of the Collie Club, is to be held in Blackburn,

on February 15th and 16th, Mr. R. Tait, of Wishaw, being the judge-elect. The fixture is a movable one, and invariably attracts considerable outside attention, and is, indirectly, the means of the ranks of exhibitors being added to every year. One of the best shows ever held by the club was that at Southport, two years ago, when the very fine Winter Gardens were hired for the occasion. It was, without a doubt, the most picturesque dog show of recent years.

The Collie Club might with advantage copy the example of their Northern brethren, and make their fixture a movable one. As yet no hall has been secured for the next show, although it is certain to be held in conjunction with the Old English Sheepdog Club, in one of the London suburbs. Last spring it was held at the Crystal Palace.

Borzoi field trials with the wolf form part of the programme of the Jubilee show of the Russian Imperial Hunt Society, to be held at St. Petersburg early in 1898. The show is to be on a very large scale, almost every breed of dog being classified, and among the foreign judges invited to make the awards is Dr. J. H. Salter, judge of the Greyhounds at the autumn show of the Kennel Club, and holder of a nomination in the Waterloo Cup. The Kelvedon gentleman is a sound authority on dogs, but he will certainly not relish giving an address on the winning dogs and pointing out their good qualities, as suggested by the committee in the schedule just issued. There would be a brilliant flow of oratory were such a stipulation to be made at English shows. BIRKDALE.

Birds that Pass in the Night.

A CORRESPONDENT of an evening paper, writing from Campden Hill, enquires whether anyone noted the remarkable flight of wildfowl, curlew, and other birds, which took place during the night of November 22nd over West London. “Their cries,” he remarks, “indicated no ordinary number, and, as an old sportsman, I regarded the circumstance as foretelling severe weather.” Without dwelling on this weather forecast, it may be noted that these midnight flights of many kinds of birds over great cities are a most interesting phenomenon. Very few people are, as a rule, awake when they take place; but from the number of times on which they have been recorded, it may be inferred that great assemblages of fowl, attracted from their course by the glare of light in towns, are more common than is supposed. On this particular night it was noticed that, even before twelve o'clock, the wildfowl on the London river were very noisy and vociferous. Water-hens, herons, and even swans, were constantly uttering calls, those of the usually silent swans being so frequent as to cause remark. There is little doubt that something unusual was already taking place, and that the river fowl were excited by observing the migrating flock passing over.

The late Mr. Stevenson, author of “The Birds of Norfolk,” had probably the best set of notes on these curious phenomena of migration ever published. “Until recently,” he remarked, “they seem to have escaped the notice of ornithologists.” He observed that these gatherings of fowl over cities usually took place on very dark nights. This is not, however, always the case, for the present writer, when reading for “Greets” at Oxford, often heard the cries of vast bodies of fowl—plover, curlew, duck, widgeon, peewits, and snipe—hovering for an hour over the city and colleges on bright starlight nights. Mr. Stevenson had known them remain for hours, apparently attracted by the lights, and not able to resume their flight till daybreak, when the spell is broken. In seventeen years he noted the dates of six such nightly visitations to the city of Norwich. On one night, August 23rd, 1865, this gathering of the feathered host was most astonishing. There was a thunderstorm early; “later the air seemed literally filled with birds, but though they were sometimes as close as one's head, it was impossible to see them, even when close to the gas lamps.”

The clamour made by the birds attracted everyone's attention, for the flight arrived over the city much earlier than usual—about ten o'clock. The main body were golden plover, lapwings, and redshanks. Among these was heard the unmistakable note of the tern, the scream of the black-headed gull, and the calls of thrushes and finches. In the morning not a bird was to be seen. Sometimes they do leave evidence of their midnight passage. At Stratford-on-Avon, on March 22nd, 1866, a mixed migration of birds descended on the town, and also passed over it at 2.30 in the morning. Starlings, snipe, ring-dotters, and wild duck were picked up next morning, killed by contact with trees, chimney tops, and telegraph wires. Wild geese, thrushes, and blackbirds were also in the flock. It was a dark morning, but the stars were visible. It would be interesting to collect further instances of these visits of “birds that pass in the night.” Similar occurrences have been noted at Leicester, Cambridge, and Corfu, where the late Lord Lilford said that at 1 a.m. one July morning he heard “an uproar as if all the feathered inhabitants of the great Acherusian marsh had met in conflict overhead.”

ON THE GREEN.

IT was not likely that Braid would be content with the result of his match with Vardon at Epsom, where the latter beat him by eight up and seven to play; and we were not surprised to hear that another match had been arranged. It was rather surprising, though, to hear that the scene of the fight was to be at Romford, for Braid—a “bad one to beat” under any circumstances—might be thought to be at his most invincible best there. But this consideration did not avail to deter Vardon, whom his latest success had, no doubt, given courage, from attacking him on his own green. He paid the penalty of his rashness. If he had counted on any demoralisation on Braid's part as the outcome of the Epsom business, he must have been badly disappointed, for never did Braid, even on his own home course, show more brilliant golf than Vardon had to contend with. The latter had some knowledge of the green. He had taken part, and with a great measure of success, in the competition held there in the spring, but, of course, his knowledge did not rival Braid's. The latter drove in his very best and longest style, prodigiously far, and he approached beautifully besides. Both men putted remarkably well, doing full justice to the undoubted excellence of the greens. Really we have never seen finer all-round putting, and more long putts holed, in a big match. But Vardon started driving a little crookedly, which is unlike him, and with Braid in such form this cost him dearly. When only nine holes had been played, Braid had won six of them, being out in 35, which means remarkable play. With six up, and Braid in such form, on his own green, the match was virtually over. From this point onward he gained no more, but held the match well in hand all the way. At the luncheon interval he was seven to the good, and his total for the first round was 71—a stroke above the record for the green—to Vardon's 77. In the second round Vardon gained a hole on the outgoing, but homeward, after a couple of halves, Braid gained this back, and won the match by seven up and six to play.

Vardon took the bye by a couple of holes; so that after the ninth hole out, where he had lost six of the nine holes played, the game underwent so great a change that on the remaining twenty-seven holes he was actually one to the good.

There is no possible doubt about the strength of the team that Oxford University is able to put into the field this year. Cambridge have a good side, too, as they have shown in many matches. In Oxford's latest team encounter, with a strong side collected by Mr. A. C. Croome, the University had all the advantage of playing on their own green. But even so it was a good performance to beat, by nineteen holes to nine, such a side as they were opposing, especially seeing that Mr. J. L. Low opened the ball for the visitors by winning eight holes from Mr. W. A. Henderson. But there was but one other hole put to the credit of the visitors' side altogether, Mr. K. Marshall beating Mr. de Montmorency by that narrow margin. All the other matches, except one that was halved, went in favour of the University. Mr. Low, in accomplishing the demolition of Mr. Henderson, played wonderful golf, all the more wonderful considering that it was the first time that he had seen the course. He actually reduced the previous record of the green by a couple of strokes, lowering it from 70 to 68—a great performance.

One always likes to see the names of new men coming to the front, and this satisfaction was given us as a result of the late professional competition at Warley, near Birmingham—the green of the Edghaston Golf Club. Where, the professional of the North Warwick Club, was first, at a total of 155, followed by F. Wingate, of Harborne, and Duncan, of Northampton, tying at 157. When it is seen that David Brown and J. Burns, both ex-champions, were behind these comparatively unknown men on the score list, it is evident that we have no need to despair of new golfing talent.

OUR PORTRAIT ILLUSTRATION.

THE HON. KATHLEEN DE MONTMORENCY, whose portrait appears on the frontispiece, is the elder surviving daughter of Viscount Frankfort de Montmorency, who was till recently Major-General in command of troops in the Dublin district. During his term of office his wife and daughters made themselves very popular. The sisters bear a strong resemblance to each other, having dark hair, and delicate, rather aquiline, features. Both their brothers are in the army.

Country Life

ILLUSTRATED.

THE Journal for all interested in
Country Life and Country Pursuits.

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COUNTRY NOTES.

ANOTHER week of boisterous, unsettled weather has to be recorded. The wind was not so high as it had been, but still a good deal of mischief was done. Canvey Island, where more than a thousand yards of the sea-wall was destroyed by the great gale, was once more flooded by the high spring tide, which again overflowed on to the mainland, and broke away a large portion of the repairing works in progress. Snow has been reported in many places, but up to the present there has not been a serious fall in London. The farmers of the low-lying land recently flooded by the sea report that it will take some years to restore payable fertility to the soil, and in one instance, at least, it is said that no attempt will be made, at any rate for the present, to reclaim the land, which, owing to the breaches in the protecting sea-wall, is covered at every tide. The damage is so extensive that reclamation would cost more than the land is worth.

A very extraordinary fish has lately been deposited in the British Museum. It is a very ordinary female sea-trout of some three pounds' weight. But while to all appearance one of the most ordinary of its kind, it has gained its niche in the British Temple of Fame by getting itself caught at sea on a "paternoster" baited with a sprat. There cannot be the slightest doubt of the truth of this strange fish tale. The fish itself was exhibited at a meeting of the British Sea Anglers' Society a few weeks ago, having been taken off Deal a short time earlier. Of course we all know that sea-trout, unlike salmon in this country, are often taken in brackish and even salt water, but the taking of a sprat on a paternoster by a fish of this species is a strange freak that we have not heard of, nor seen recorded before, though doubtless many curious things happen, in the angling way, and go unrecorded. Now that fishing has taken such a hold on the sporting instincts of so many, there is less chance of any unusual capture being passed over, as if of no general interest. One of the most curious "fish tails," showing an abnormal development of that organ, and also of the fins, was lately recorded in the columns of COUNTRY LIFE, together with a reproduction from a photograph of the little trout with his immense tail. This last was a brown trout, but for all his caudal development he did not earn such high honour as a place in the British Museum.

While one part of the world—more particularly the Cinque Ports country, and north of that, along the Norfolk and Lincolnshire Coasts—is still bemoaning the disasters it has suffered under the visitation of exceptional flood, another part is still, even now that the time is well on in December, languishing and panting in a dearth of water. In all that high country in the North of Sussex—the East Grinstead neighbourhood—a well that has water in it is not the rule, but the bright exception. The majority of small country folk are carrying water both for ablution and for drinking. It is unprecedented at such a late season of the year. It would appear as if all this country were supplied—so to phrase it, not without irony—with water, not so much out of springs, of which no man knows the secret sources, but rather out of the water held up in a certain porous stratum which pervades all the country-side. Here the stratum is at a great depth, and there it is near the surface. Here it is tapped by a well of thirty feet, and there only reached by one of a hundred and fifty. It needs caution, too, that in well-boring one go not

too deep, and pierce to a lower stratum than that in which the water is held up, for if such a fatal accident as that occur, the water may run clean away as through a cracked teacup. But whether the water-bearing stratum lie deep or shallow, in all cases its manner of giving out its water into the wells is similar—not with the rush of a spring, but rather with a steady, slow, oozing, or weeping out of its pores. But, of course, it cannot weep without something to make its tears of. It must have water in it before it can let it out; and it seems as if the stratum had never really recovered its fair *quantum* of moisture since the drought of last Jubilee year, 1887.

Again, it suffered a severe drought as lately as 1895, and none of the recent winters have given it a fair supply of snow. Snow is one of the least agreeable though most beautiful of Nature's gifts to us, but no one observing streams and water-supply generally can fail to conclude that most of the supply depends on the winter snow. This spring, for instance, was peculiarly wet, yet the rivers just afterwards were reduced to the merest trickle. Snow, lying packed on the hills, and slowly oozing itself down into the reservoirs of the ground is the real storage of the water we drink, wash in, fish in. It is such infinitely disagreeable stuff to get about in, that it is well to be able to point out its merits in compensation. But let those who have a fear of piercing the water-bearing stratum of their well, enlarge it by "adits"—that is, by chambers in the same plane, enlarging both the weeping area and the storage area—rather than risk letting all the water out by boring down to a rocky stratum that may be full of rents and fissures.

Apart from the Corrie Meeting, where, by the way, the two cups fell to Mr. J. Russel—who this season has an average of a good stake a week—and Mr. R. F. Gladstone, there was very little of interest to coursing men in last week's fixtures. On Saturday, however, there was a rare gathering of the clans at the Barbican, the announcement of the dispersal of Mr. R. S. Pye's kennel attracting buyers from all parts of the South. A large lot of exceedingly useful saplings were also put up for public competition, Mr. F. Ward securing 120 guineas for a very good-looking litter of six, by Mad Fury—Woman of Fashion. The Falconer stock, on view at Newmarket the previous week, also sold well, Dr. Rutherford Harris making several purchases. The latter gentleman bids fair to have the strongest kennel in the South, and it is to undertake entire management of this establishment that the veteran, Mr. R. S. Pye, is disposing of all his stock. Top price—50 guineas—was secured for Sweet Cocoa, a bitch that will most likely fill a Waterloo nomination, for she has already this season performed more than respectably, having won the Oaks at Rochford, divided at Sleaford, and won two good trials at the Hornby Castle Meeting. Dr. Rutherford Harris was her purchaser.

One of those unfortunate cases in which the interests of fox-hunters and shooting men clash, has given rise to a dispute between Mr. D. P. Sellar, of Brentwood, and the Essex Hunt. It appears that recently a fox was found at Curtis Mill Green, and after a long run made for one of Mr. Sellar's pheasant coverts, in which he was lost. The hounds followed him into the covert, and, in answer to the game-keeper, the acting master is reported to have pointed out that they were "not drawing, and that he could not stop them now." Eventually the fox went to earth, the hounds were called off, and the whip was left to dig out the fox. On receiving his game-keeper's report of the incident, Mr. Sellar wrote an angry letter to the M.F.H., demanding an explanation, and sent all the correspondence to the local press for publication. Now this is precisely the kind of quarrel against which the article recently published in these pages, entitled "A Serious Question," was intended to protest, and it is to be hoped that a give and take policy on both sides may find a ready and amicable way out of the difficulty. We do not express an opinion as to the rights or wrongs of this particular case, having the keenest sympathy for both sports. It, however, seems a matter that could easily have been arranged without an acrimonious correspondence in the newspapers.

At a largely-attended meeting of the members of the Camera Club held on Thursday last, Dr. C. S. Patterson delivered a lecture on "The Romance of Fish Life." Confining himself to British fishes, and those the commonest and best known, he showed conclusively that modern biological investigation has revealed the life histories and habits of these fishes to be of the most interesting character. Although lecturing to a scientific audience, the language employed throughout was lucid and simple, but, at the same time, many errors which are to be found even in the most recent natural history books were ruthlessly exposed. The subject is a new one for a popular lecture, but, admirably delivered and copiously illustrated as it is with lantern slides from natural specimens, it is one worth everybody's while to hear, and it is to be hoped that it will be repeated in

many places. The lecturer, an admitted expert on the subject, thoroughly upholds the contentions which have from time to time been put forward in these columns, both as to the supreme importance of the fisheries to the nation, as an industry and a food supply, and also as to the urgent need for reform in the methods and seasons of deep sea fishing as at present carried on.

There is a very strong feeling in Ireland against the proposed alterations in the Rules of Racing by the Irish Turf Club Stewards. The change which Mr. Blake proposes to make is to prohibit any race official from holding more than one office at a meeting. By this, the posts of handicapper, judge, clerk of the scales, starter, and clerk of the course, should each be filled by separate individuals. This might work well enough in the larger meetings, where the funds are not tightened, but it would simply mean a death-blow to the small struggling rural gatherings. Everyone knows that these country meetings are the feeders of the Irish Turf, and anything inimical to them means injury to racing generally.

Ireland can lay claim to being the birthplace of some of the greatest soldiers in the British army; but now she can justly also claim the honour of producing the biggest man. This is a young fellow who has just been enlisted in the 83rd Regimental District, Belfast. He is a native of the County Louth, and is 6ft. 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. He goes into the Horse Guards, and if his weight is anything like in proportion to his height, the unfortunate horse which has to carry him will certainly be very much in "the Blues." Captain Ames, of the 2nd Life Guards—whose nose is now put out of joint—comes next, and a sergeant of the Royal Irish Constabulary comes in a poor third with 6ft. 7in.

It is a dangerous thing in these crowded times to indulge in any change of dates, as Blackheath, through no fault of their own, are realising to their great disappointment. The International authorities found it necessary to postpone for a week the date of the North and South match, which should have taken place on Saturday last. The result has been that Blackheath were left with a blank day on Saturday, and will have to engage Cardiff next Saturday with a very indifferent side. An attempt was made to induce Cardiff to postpone their match with Penarth and visit London instead, an arrangement to which the Penarth authorities made no objections, but Cardiff would have none of it, which was hardly generous on their part. The result is that on Saturday one of the hollowest of games will take the place of the keenly-expected contest, between the two best clubs of the West and East.

There were several interesting games both in London and the provinces, but in point of excitement the Richmond and Moseley encounter takes first place. Though playing with a strong wind, Richmond failed to score before half-time, while Moseley crossed the line twice almost immediately they found the wind in their favour. The Richmond forwards have long held a great reputation for playing an uphill game, but on this occasion they surpassed themselves. Though playing without one of the wing three-quarters, they managed by sheer vigour to cross the Moseley line three times in the last twenty minutes, and thus pulled out of the fire an apparently hopeless game. The most prominent item in provincial football is the continued success of Gloucester, whose meeting with Newport produced some very keen play, but no score.

By their victory over Somerset on Saturday Devon have achieved the championship of the south-west, and have now to meet the Midlands for the honour of playing in the final for the County Championship. Somerset were, perhaps, unlucky to lose, as they could not appear in nearly their full strength, since both the Welsh contingent were retained by their several clubs and Woods was also absent. On paper their forwards look of overwhelming strength, if the number of Internationals is any test, but, curiously, though fighting was tough, Devon undoubtedly owed their victory to their superiority forward.

The superiority of Cambridge in cross-country running was aggressively apparent in the Inter-Varsity match last week. Though the run was a most enjoyable one, there was scarcely any racing in it, as the last of the Cambridge team was scarcely a quarter of a mile behind the first of the Oxford. But the event was foregone; people at Oxford somehow have lost interest in this meeting. The arrangements made for the race by the Thames Hare and Hounds were very thorough, and much appreciated by the runners, as was also the hospitality of the four clubs that offered the evening entertainment. A pleasant cross-country race was also to be seen on Saturday last at Kensal Rise, when the five counties met, and Middlesex, as was right and proper, both won easily on points and provided the winner in J. Walker, who did a good performance in defeating Davis, of Surrey.

Bicycles certainly have their virtues, but it not seldom happens that the defects of the virtues are much more apparent. An unfortunate, named Miller, has just covered, in a six-days' race at New York, 2,093 miles—and this on a track with nine laps to the mile. The number of revolutions involved is appalling to think of, and it is astonishing that so many spectators should have delighted in the performance. Anything more revolting than the details of the struggle it would be difficult to imagine. The men fell asleep on their machines, and naturally both collided and fell, and, being unable to stand, were dragged off the arena by their trainers. Some gave way mentally, several were in great physical pain, and yet kept going for the whole miserable period. What a pity that Anglo-Saxon energy and racing instinct could not find a less silly, unpleasant, and harmful outlet!

The first match against the combined Australians has not opened very propitiously. "It never rains but it pours" has been an unfortunately verified proverb in both metaphor and fact. First a quinsy seized Ranjitsinhji by the throat, though he insisted on playing, in spite of the parental authority that would have persuaded him to remain inactive. Then the sad news from England reached Stoddart, and robbed him of any desire to appear. When eventually the weakened team were to come into the field, the actual rain came down in torrents, and the owners of the ground put their veto on all play for the day. This decision of theirs caused some friction, as it appears that both the umpires had declared the wicket fit for play, and the English captain had not been consulted or even informed of the probable determination. Preliminary misfortunes certainly on this occasion did not come singly or even in threes.

However, one advantage accrued from the postponement, and that was the greater efficiency of Ranjitsinhji. He must have still been very weak, if quinsy in Australia is anything like it is in England. McGahey, of Essex fame, who is touring in Australia for his health, was on the ground ready, even anxious, to take his place, but Ranjitsinhji felt, as he has proved, that even a weakened edition of himself was the more dangerous opponent; but it is as strange to see him going in so late as it must be disheartening to a tired bowler. The bats of the team have done themselves full justice, and their performances speak for themselves. Ranjitsinhji, with a century and three-quarters, showed grand form; Storer maintained his wonderful consistency; McLaren with a fourth century gave further proof of his extraordinary physique; and Hayward, who had been rather the failure of the tour, apparently delighted the large crowd with his finished off strokes. The performance would have been great on a fast wicket, but considering that the ground was soaked with three days' rain, and fast as Australian grounds recover under the burning sun of a Southern summer's day, the feat must be rated as abnormal, even for such a team.

There was no more popular veteran among metropolitan oarsmen than the late Mr. J. M. Hastie, who died last week. In his prime—between 1875 and 1881—he was a mainstay of the Thames Rowing Club, for whom he did yeoman service, both in his rowing under the red, white, and black, when they could beat all comers in the Grand at Henley, and in his official position as captain. In 1876 the Thames Rowing Club won the Grand for the first time, with Mr. Hastie as stroke, and he again led his club to victory two years later, such well-known sportsmen as E. C. Otter, B. J. Angle, and W. H. Eyre being in the crew of 1875. Partnered by Eyre, too, he showed himself a master of pair-oared rowing, as wins in the Goblets in 1877, 1880, and 1881 testify. When his active rowing career ended, Mr. Hastie was always ready to give his services as coach to his club crews, and the Thames Rowing Club never had a better mentor, while as umpire at various regattas and races he was eminently the right man in the right place. Universally regretted by a very large circle of friends, poor "Jimmie" Hastie was laid to rest in Sunbury Churchyard on Monday last, and all those present felt the appropriateness of the Thames Rowing Club tribute "in memory of a great oarsman, a wise coach, and a staunch friend."

The majority of Southern lacrosse clubs had ordinary fixtures on Saturday, no important divisional games being decided. A capital contest resulted from the meeting of Snaresbrook and West London at Wimbledon Park, the former having the advantage in the first half, but losing it in the second, West London winning by nine goals to four. Croydon, too, made a good fight against Surbiton at Hampton Wick, starting the second half with the score at "two all." Surbiton then went ahead, and won by seven to four, a total which might have been increased. Blackheath had a rather weak team against Hampstead at Gospel Oak, and the home club won easily by nine goals to one. To-day (Saturday) the chief ordinary matches are West London v. Blackheath, at Wimbledon Park; Wood-

ford v. Surbiton, at Woodford; Snaresbrook v. Clapham, at Snaresbrook; and Hampstead v. Catford, at Catford; while Croydon play Surbiton II., at West Norwood, in a Senior Shield game, and in the third division Highgate meet Willoughby at Gospel Oak.

Further success attended Bromley and Teddington, the two leading hockey teams of the South, on Saturday, but both won by the narrowest of margins, the Kent club defeating Molesey by one goal to nil, and Teddington beating Southgate by two goals to one. Another close game was that between Wimbledon and Surbiton, which was drawn, two goals being scored by each team. In the North an interesting county match took place, in which Lancashire defeated Yorkshire. On Monday Oxford University played Teddington in Bushey Park, but were easily beaten by five goals to nil.

The partridge driving on the Earl of Leicester's estate at Holkham is usually the most interesting event in the annals of partridge shooting during the year. The big days usually begin in the second week of December, and the sport lasts for four days. This season, December 7th and the three following days were devoted to driving. The guns were Sir John Gladstone, Colonel Custance, Mr. Upcher, Major Hood, Mr. Lombe, Lord Coke, Colonel Hon. W. Coke, Major Hon. W. Coke; and the number of partridges killed—623 on December 7th; 690, December 8th; 555, December 9th; and 555, December 10th; 2,423 in all. This great total, from what has been for years consistently the best partridge ground in England, was surpassed last year, when the driving took place on December 8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th. The guns were H.R.H. the Duke of York, Lord Wenlock, Mr. Lombe, Sir John Gladstone, Colonel Custance, Mr. Upcher, Major Hon. W. Coke, and Lord Coke.

On December 8th, three pheasants, 1,133 partridges, 17 hares, and five various were bagged. Next day yielded 808 head, including 771 partridges and 33 hares. On the 10th, 728 partridges were bagged, and on the last day 807 partridges, five hares, and two various. The total for the four days was 3,514 head. This is, we believe, the record four days' partridge shooting for Holkham, and, indeed, for Great Britain. Lord Leicester himself manages the whole shoot, and directs the working of the drives. It is proposed to give some illustrations of this year's partridge driving at Holkham in a future number, for the facilities for taking which our thanks are due to Lord Leicester's invariable courtesy, one of the many qualities which have won him the affection and regard of his neighbours in Norfolk, of all classes and all conditions.

The Yorkshire rivers are in flood at present, and the higher moors covered with snow. A few pike have been taken in the deeps, and, when the rivers fine down, good sport may be expected amongst the grayling with the swimming worm.

The grouse season closed, in wild, stormy weather, on Friday last. As is usual in Yorkshire, a good many parties were out during the last few days on most of the moors, but bags ranged small, owing to the boisterous weather. Large breeding stocks are left, and grouse are exceptionally healthy and free from all trace of disease.

In England the life of a football referee has its trials, when his decisions lead to language from spectators and occasionally to mobbing, while assaults by players have not been unknown. In France, however, one of the qualifications for holding the whistle on a football field seems to be an acquaintance with pistols and rapiers, for on Saturday it is reported that a player, who appears to be something of a fire-eater as well as a footballer, came to words with a referee, whose rulings on the game did not meet with his approval. Blows followed the words, and a challenge came later. Even now the deadly combat may have taken place, and honour have been duly satisfied. The result of the incident should be a very careful attention by referees in France to the off-side rule, and some hesitation about the use of the whistle when a noted football duellist has the ball.

The signs of winter, according to our correspondents in the Southern Counties, continue to appear, but as yet without much fulfilment of those signs in any way other than severe storms of wind and scuds of rain. There is little appearance of frost, and none, as yet, of snow; but the fieldfares have begun to show themselves, and the starlings are gathered into those large flocks that they affect, as if for warmth and company, in the cold weather. December 7th is the date given by one correspondent as the first day on which he observed the starlings going together in any large companies. Generally they have packed a good deal earlier in the season, but this year we seem to be behind the calendar in all aspects of country life.

HIPPIAS.

COUNTRY HOMES: Claremont.

THE house of the Duchess of Albany is notable, perhaps, more for the interesting people who have dwelt there than for itself. The country about it is delightful, and has attracted many to Claremont, but the house has a plain and unattractive exterior, though, as we shall see, much interest attaches to it nevertheless, and it is beautifully furnished and fitted within. The creator of Claremont, which did not then, however, bear that name, was the famous architect and dramatist, Sir John Vanbrugh, who, feeling the breezy charm of that part of Surrey, purchased land, and built for himself a small brick house in a lower situation than that of the present mansion. It was a time when parts of the Surrey heathland and pasture were being bought for the creation of the pleasant parks and domains for which the region is now famous, and of which several date from the same period.

Sir John Vanbrugh sold the estate to Thomas Pelham Holles, created Duke of Newcastle in 1716, the Minister, associated first with Walpole and then with Pitt, of whom Lord Stanhope says, "his peculiarities were so glaring and ridiculous that the most careless glance could not mistake, nor the most bitter enemy exaggerate, them." He had not yet been raised to the dukedom, and the name of Claremont is derived from the title he then bore. In order to be able to entertain his Ministerial friends, Newcastle added largely to Vanbrugh's house, built the castellated prospect tower, which still stands to the west of the present mansion, and greatly enlarged the park, in the laying out of which he is said to have employed Kent, who, at that time, when many gardens were being reconstructed,



Photo. by H. N. King,

THE DRAWING-ROOM.

Avenue Road, W.

had become famous as a landscape gardener. Sir Samuel Garth sang the charms of the Duke's abode. "The situation," he said, "is so agreeable and surprising, that it inclines one to think some place of this nature put Ovid at first upon the story of 'Narcissus and Echo.'" Kent had already laid out the grounds at Esher, where lived Henry Pelham, the Duke's brother. "I have been laughing at Claremont House," wrote Walpole, in 1748. "Do you know, the pine-apples are literally sent to Hanover by couriers?" It was at about this time that the Pelhams returned to power, and were high in the favour of the Court; and the Duke had unfailing energy in attaching himself to the safe and winning side.

When he died the estate was sold to the great Lord Clive. This appears to have been in 1769, when the victor had returned to England in the greatness of his triumphs and successes, but to find the causes that embittered the remainder of his days already at work, and Mr. Sullivan and his enemies at the India Office in very active hostility to him. Clive was ill, but he threw his energy into the improvement of the estate he had bought, in which he saw greater capabilities. The old house was pulled down, and the present structure rose on the higher ground. Those are the arms of the victor of Plassey that are seen over the portico. It is said by Macaulay that the peasantry around, whom some dim echo of the reputed misdeeds of Robert Clive had reached in their cottages, were filled with mysterious horror as the new Claremont arose, whispering among themselves that the great wicked lord built the walls so thick to keep out the devil, who would yet bodily carry him away. The work of building the house and rearranging the park and



Photo. by H. N. King,

AN OLD CEDAR TREE.

Avenue Road, W.



COUNTRY HOMES; CLAREMONT; THE EAST FRONT.

Photo. by H. N. King.

Avenue Road, W.

grounds was entrusted to "Capability" Brown, who has more than once been alluded to in these papers. Brown had risen from small beginnings to be a landscape gardener, and he aspired to be an architect, but Claremont is said to have been the only mansion he ever erected from the ground. It therefore occupies a certain unique position in domestic architecture.

After Clive's death, in 1774, Lord Galway bought Claremont, and then the Earl of Tyrconnel, from whom it passed by sale to Mr. Charles Rose Ellis, whose better-known brother, it may be remembered, was a friend and correspondent of Sir Walter Scott. Mr. Ellis sold the place in 1816 to the Crown, and it was settled upon Princess Charlotte and her husband, Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, afterwards King of the Belgians. The unhappy youth of the Princess, owing to the dissensions of her parents, and the high qualities of her heart and intellect, endeared her to the people, and her untimely death, shortly after she had taken up her residence at Claremont, spread deep distress through the

country. Memories of her gentleness still linger in the neighbourhood of her home, with which she will ever be associated. She died in the room at the south-west angle of the house on November 6th, 1817, and a number of memorials of her are still preserved in the mansion. Thus in the gallery are full-length portraits of herself and her husband; in the library, pictures of those who assisted in her education; and elsewhere portraits of her favourite horses and dogs.

Upon the death of the King of the Belgians, in 1865, Claremont House reverted to the Crown, but it had meanwhile been the residence for a time of King Louis Philippe, who died there in 1850. The Duke and Duchess of Connaught resided at Claremont after their marriage, and the house has now for some time been the abode of the Duchess of Albany. It is thus closely associated with the Royal Family, and its name is familiar to all Englishmen as the home of a gracious lady whom affliction touched with cruel finger but two years after her marriage with the late lamented Duke of Albany.

Though the brick house, with its stone dressings, is not beautiful, it is surrounded by very charming scenery. Kent and Brown were, perhaps, our best landscape gardeners, though the latter, at least, wrought some destruction of beautiful things that had been prized before, and they contrived the planting and improving of Claremont Park with great success and undeniable taste. Varied foliage, sweeping lawns, a prettily diversified lake of several acres, and an abundance of gay flowers are its attractions. In one beautiful part of the grounds is a small Gothic "mausoleum" of Princess Charlotte, originally intended as a shady garden alcove, but finished, as at present, by Prince Leopold, and here was fittingly brought his own monument, which Her Majesty had erected in St. George's Chapel, Windsor. Take it for all in all, then, by reason of its imposing character, spaciousness, and beautiful park and gardens, Claremont is well fitted to be the home of a Royal Princess and her children.

JOHN LEYLAND.



Photo. by H. N. King,

A VIEW IN THE GROUNDS.

Avenue Road, W.

CYCLING NOTES.

EVERY old time cyclist has generally a tale to tell of some particularly moving experience in which a fowl or other feckless creature has mixed itself up with his front wheel. Sometimes these narratives are suspiciously received by their auditory, but none the less are they inherently probable, for the revolving wheel, whether of ordinary or safety, presents nothing but the hub and rim to the eye of whatever bird or animal essays to clear it in its stride. If anything of a pace be on the machine the result is destined to be serious—sometimes to the machine, sometimes to the fowl or quadruped, and frequently to the rider. Not long ago a Nottinghamshire wheelman was seriously crippled owing to a collision of this kind, the offending animal in this instance being a dog. A more recent instance, however, was still more unfortunate, and ended in fatality. At Middlesbrough, the other evening, a boy was cycling at a speed, it was deposed at the inquest, of seven miles an hour, when a cat jumped into the spokes of his front wheel. He was thrown on to his head and picked up bleeding, and the poor lad died soon afterwards. The incident may have its parallels, but it is the first I have encountered in which a cat has unwittingly caused a calamity so dire. I have been bowled over by a big Dalmatian hound in France, chased by the foxy little curs of German villages, and in Switzerland and Italy have occasionally ridden in fear of dogs that were too sportively or viciously inclined; but the Middlesbrough tragedy is an unpleasant admonition of what is at least possible from even the "harmless, necessary cat."

There was much merry-making in certain Rural Councils when the famous "hedge-cutting circular" from the Cyclists' Touring Club came up for consideration, but Nemesis, in the shape of public opinion, is overtaking the hilarious councillors, and in more than one case the original policy has been reversed. At the meeting of the Holbeach Urban District Council last week, for instance, the resolution passed a month previously, that the circular should lie on the table, was now rescinded, and instructions were given to the surveyor to see that thorns and hedge clippings were swept up, so as not to be a danger to cyclists. This conversion of an erstwhile antagonistic body is encouraging; but what is still more so is the fact that some 250 county and district councils and municipal corporations have replied in favourable terms to the circular in question. It is comforting to know that next autumn the unconscionable thorn will trouble the wheelman to a far less degree than in any previous year.

The bicycle thief is as busy as ever, and the police and assize courts have now a regular percentage of cases of more or less systematic plunder of cycles. To such a degree was this manifest at the recent Lincoln Quarter Sessions, that the

Recorder, in charging the grand jury, remarked that he thought those sessions would hereafter be known as the Bicycle Sessions, for out of seven cases no fewer than six related to the alleged stealing of bicycles, or obtaining them by false pretences.

In the course of an interesting paper in the *New Review* on "Some Points in Cycle-Making," Mr. J. K. Starley gives the following as the approximate weights of the racing and roadster type of machine respectively:—Racer—Saddle and seat rod, 1lb. 6oz. 7dr.; frame, 4lb. 8oz.; cranks, spindle, etc., 2lb. 8oz. 10dr.; handles, with bar and adjustment, 1lb. 0oz. 6dr.; wheels, 4lb. 14oz. 4dr.; chain, 1lb. 2oz. 4dr.; tyres, 2lb. 14oz. 4dr.; front fork, 1lb. 11oz. 7dr.; rat-trap pedals, 1lb. 0oz. 10dr.; and adjusting parts, 1lb. 6oz. 12dr.; total, 22lb. 9oz. Roadster—Saddle and seat rod, 3lb. 2oz. 5dr.; frame, 5lb. 4oz. 15dr.; cranks, etc., 2lb. 9oz. 13dr.; handle bar, etc., and brake, 2lb. 6oz. 6dr.; wheels, 6lb. 5oz. 2dr.; chain, 1lb. 1oz. 12dr.; tyres, 5lb. 2oz. 8dr.; front fork, 1lb. 13oz. 8dr.; mud-guards, 1lb. 8oz. 7dr.; gear-case, 1lb. 14oz. 12dr.; rubber pedals, 1lb. 15oz. 3dr.; and adjusting parts, 1lb. 14oz. 3dr.; total, 35lb. 2oz. 14dr.

Though Mr. Starley merely states these figures and draws no deductions therefrom, they serve the useful purpose of showing the impossibility of building an ultra-light machine for use on the road. An analysis of the respective weights reveals the fact that the substantial difference between the totals is almost entirely a matter of equipment, and that little or nothing can be taken out of the frame. The latter, in the case of the path-racer, is but 12oz. 15dr. less than the roadster, while the cranks and spindles differ by 1oz., the wheels by 1lb. 6oz., the front fork by 2oz., and the adjusting parts by 7oz. The total difference, in fact, between the two machines, in their skeleton form, is but 2lb. 14oz. All the rest is made up of equipments, such as brake, mud-guards, and gear-case—which are entirely foreign to the racing machine—together with the extra weight imported into the saddle, pedals, and tyres in order to render them suitable for road use.

It is, therefore, perfectly clear that the rider who covets an abnormally light machine on the road must run considerable risk by saving a little on the frame—less than 3lb., even if he uses a path-racer—and also sacrifice a material amount of comfort. Fine weather and smooth roads are essential to the use of such a machine, and they are not to be secured on demand, for the sunniest of skies may precede a storm, and the smoothest of roads must have an end. The degree of comfort which it is desired to ensure, as regards the saddle and the

tyres, is a matter on which the rider may exercise his individual preferences; but when it comes to weight-cutting with respect to the frame itself, the less he attempts the better, for the difference between a level track, of perfect surface, and the varying gradients and frequent roughness of the highways, is too great to be ignored.

The chief point which Mr. Starley makes in his article is that the high-grade bicycle is essentially a costly production, demanding much skilled work and many processes. Before the brazing of the frame is ever begun, he states, as many as 138 processes are needed to reduce the parts to their required dimensions, while the skilled labour which is necessary for the finishing processes is also duly pointed out. With respect to cheap machines, he expresses the emphatic opinion that there is "as great a difference between the high-grade machine and the cheap one as there is between any other piece of perfect work and its mere mechanical imitation." The more one studies the subject of cycle-building, the more one is compelled to recognise that this is so, despite one's wishes that the perfect cycle were purchasable at half its present price.

TUE PILGRIM



Photo. Thomas,

RYE HOUSE CASTLE.

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LITERARY NOTES.

CULTIVATED gaiety and refined enjoyment of the pleasures of life are the leading characteristics of the gatherings of the Omar Khayyam Club, and that of last week was no exception to the rule. Mr. Henry Norman made an excellent chairman, and Mr. L. F. Austin delivered a speech which positively coronated with witty epigram. But the triumph of the evening belonged to Colonel John Hay, the American Ambassador—who spoke, by the way, without a trace of American accent. Somehow or other, the shorthand writer found his way into the assembly of the select, and it is needless to say that, after the manner of his kind, he spoiled Colonel John Hay's best sentence. Colonel Hay spoke of Omar as a man "with a faith too wide for creed, and a benevolence too deep for doctrine." Will it be believed that even the *Academy* murdered this pretty antithesis by talking of "a benevolence untrammelled by doctrine"? Besides, that is not the way to spell "untrammelled."

For one man who was present at the feast it was impossible not to feel sympathy. He was Mr. Richard Le Gallienne. Deadly pale, and with his raven locks hanging down his back, he had to listen while men sang the praises of Fitzgerald; and though his own name was never mentioned, it was easy to see that the Omarians resented his invasion of Fitzgerald's domain. Very pleasant, however, was it to observe, and to join in, the cordial welcome extended to Mr. Frederick Greenwood. All that veteran's best work has been done under the modest cloak of anonymity. Twice, for conscience's sake, has he retired from the editorship of a journal of the first class of importance. His journalistic style is as near perfection as may be. Pointed and coherent in argument, graceful and fluent in language, he compels attention. Above all things, he is a master of the science of punctuation, a science which to those who know it not seems trivial. But Greenwood can use the semi-colon as a magician's wand, and he is one of the kindest men in England, as well as one of the most honest.

For some unknown reason, the *Saturday Review* is bitterly prejudiced, even venomously acrid, in its allusions to Professor Max Müller; not long ago, indeed, it permitted Mr. Herbert Vivian to deface its columns by an attack on that pleasant and learned old gossip, which was a piece of vulgarity pardonable only by reason of the youth of the lampooner. So, when it is announced that

the Professor is about to bring out another volume of reminiscences, the *Saturday* sneers that "the affection of Professor Max Müller for a prince is not to be repressed by public criticism." But the world which loves pleasant literature, which revels in the innocent chatter of a refined scholar who has met everybody worth meeting, will hail with gladness the announcement made by Messrs. Longmans. It has always seemed to me that the contributions of the Professor to *Cosmopolis* have been of priceless value in establishing the position of that important review.

I note with pleasure that Mr. Richard Kearton, whose admirable workmanship in "With Nature and a Camera" has been mentioned in these columns, is at work upon a new volume to be concerned with open air life in the North of England. His account of St. Kilda and the St. Kildans proves conclusively that he can draw truly human pictures, and the North of England, with its "sportsmen," should afford a happy hunting ground for a man of his tastes.

Apart from these little items of interest, there is nothing particularly thrilling in the literary announcements, and, in these circumstances, it seems wise to devote a little space to the books amongst which we must soon make choice in the interests of the boys and girls. One of the best of these is the "King of the Broncos," by C. F. Lummis, published by Messrs. Newnes. Mr. Lummis has found a fresh subject in New Mexico, and he evidently knows his subject to the finger tips. His stories of the life of the *vagueros*—the Spanish sounds ever so much better than the blunt English "cowboys"—and of the catching and breaking of the wild horses, may be read with no common interest. They have life and vigour in them; and the man can describe so that one feels as if one was in New Mexico. Mr. Lummis will go far. Another capital book for boys is "The Vanished Yacht," by E. Harcourt Burrage (Nelson). The story, it is true, goes rather further from probabilities than is pardonable. To steal a yacht would be almost an impossible feat. But when once Mr. Burrage has transported his readers to South America, whether the scene of action be the East Coast or the West, the pages positively reek with blood-curdling adventure; in fact, it is a first-rate boys' book. In the "Story of Ab" (A. and C. Black), Mr. Stanley Waterloo has chosen an old scene of action which is quite new. A romance relating the adventures of cave men in encounter with mammoths is sure to attract the boyish mind; but the facetiousness of the early pages is a little laboured and tiresome. "Wee Doggie" (Nelson), by E. C. Traill, is a useful book for its purpose; that is to say, it is probably intended to be read to little children. The humour in "The Wallypug in London" (Methuen) is the work, very much the work, for it is laboured, of Mr. G. E. Farrow. The illustrations, by Mr. Alan Wright, are excellent and full of fun; they remind one of the pictures which came with the Alice books of "Lewis Carroll." No story of child life could be more exactly suitable for girls than Mrs. Molesworth's "Miss Mouse and Her Boys" (Macmillans). Another book which will be a welcome present to a boy is Mr. Robert Leighton's "Golden Galleon."

It is not astonishing to find that Dr. Vaughan's library, being sold in Cardiff, went for an old song. Good libraries ought never to be sold in the provinces, and London is the only market in which they find anything like a proper price. Moreover, the market value of books is at all times a thing uncertain and fluctuating. Thus, an Aldine "Homer" sold a while ago for £14, which, at the Sunderland sale, would have fetched £90 and more. Again, in November at Sotheby's a first edition of Shelton's "Don Quixote," in fair condition, sold for £41, while a copy, in no better condition, from the Ashburnham Library, fetched £106 in June. In fact, fancy values for books are as uncertain as they are artificial.

Two children's books of exceptional merit come from Mr. David Nutt, who never does anything badly. First of them is the book of "Krah," by His Honour Judge Parry, which will be bought at once by those who already know "Katakampus" and the other books of the same writer. Of "The Giant and other Tales from Old India," by W. H. D. Rouse, the chief virtue is to be found in the illustrations by Mr. W. Robinson; but the stories are quaint, interesting, and commendably brief.

Books to order from the library:—

"Life and Times of Cardinal Wiseman." Wilfrid Ward. (Longmans.)

"Untold Tales of the Past." Beatrice Harraden. (Blackwood.)

"Surprising Adventures of Sir Toady Lion." S. R. Crockett. (Gardner and Darton.)

"Pickwickian Manners and Customs." Percy Fitzgerald. (Roxburghe Press.)

"Perpetua." S. Baring Gould. (Dutton.)

"Nicolina Niccolini." By the Author of "Mademoiselle Mori." (Gardner and Darton.)

LOOKER-ON.

SMITHFIELD CLUB SHOW.

THE Smithfield Club has now entered on the hundredth year of its existence, and that it has done much for those farmers who devote their attention to the feeding of stock, even the captious critic, who is ever to the fore when farming topics are under discussion, must admit. In many respects the ninety-ninth annual show, which, as usual, took place during the early days of the present month, is a record, and the increase in the number of entries in the cattle classes is very satisfactory. The sheep were not so numerous as they have been of late, and it is noticeable that there has been a falling off in the sheep classes at most of the fat stock shows of late years. Is this because the days of fat mutton have gone by, and the people have a difficulty in selling the big and heavy sheep which do not succeed in taking honours at the show? Perhaps this is the case, for anyone who attends our markets knows how difficult it is to sell heavy fat sheep now. Half a century ago, and even later, mutton could not be too fat for the Wakefield and other West Riding markets. Now, however, small weights alone will go down. The Smithfield Club Show is quite as much a breeder's show as a grazier's, and the improvement in cattle breeding is, perhaps, more marked at the show than at the summer exhibitions, if a man will read between the lines. Not many years ago, it is within the memory of all middle-aged men, a heavy beast, fed up to the top, was frequently loose in handle, lumpy on his rumps, and had a good deal of rough beef about him. Now we have changed all that, and the rank and file, as well as the prize-taking animals, are distinguished by the firmness and levelness of their flesh and by the absence of all tendency to coarseness. For this we have to thank the industry and intelligence of our breeders, who have been quick to notice the weak points of the animals they have bred, and indefatigable in their efforts to eradicate them, efforts which have been very successful, though there still remains something to do. The history of the Smithfield Club shows a wonderful improvement in that part of our agricultural industry which relates to the breeding and feeding of live stock, but in one or two particulars there seems to be a want. "Early maturity"

has long been the object of breeder and grazier, and early maturity is most desirable from an economic standpoint. But for all that, one misses those grand classes of four year old steers, which were, after all, the perfection of beef from the standpoint of the gastronomist.

Much interest attached to the recent Cattle Show, as in some important classes animals came together that had earned many honours in the show-ring. One class which afforded considerable food for discussion whilst the judging was proceeding was that for Shorthorn steers above two and a-half and not exceeding three years old. Everyone seemed of opinion that the right three had been selected, but for some time, so evenly balanced were the merits of the animals, the decision hung in the balance. At last the first prize was awarded to Sir Humphrey de Trafford's Harry, so very even fleshed a steer, that it seems impossible to make any better. A beautiful shaped beast, full of quality, he merited his place in the class, though he was, perhaps, as some critics averred, a trifle short. He was the Birmingham Shorthorn champion, and next to him was placed the Edinburgh Shorthorn champion, Mr. George Bruce's Seafeld, a roan of similar character to the winner, very good on his loins and hind quarters, but a little wanting behind his forelegs. Mr. J. Fletcher Douglas' third prize steer, Kirk Duke, had the length the others lacked, and forward he was pretty nearly perfect, but he was high on the tail, a circumstance to which he doubtless owed his defeat. In the class for cross-bred steers of the same age there was a still more interesting contest. Mr. John Wortley's General, a blue-grey that was champion at Birmingham, and Lord Rosebery's Scottish Hero, who was champion at Edinburgh, were at once selected as the two between which the

struggle would lie. The pair met last year at Smithfield, where Scottish Hero won, but this time matters were reversed, and General not only won in his class, but took the champion prize for the best beast in the yard as well. General is a blue-grey, a cross between the Galloway—of which there are two crosses—and Shorthorn. He was bred by Mr. W. Parkin Moore, of Whitehall, near Carlisle, and has developed into a beautiful steer, well ribbed, and full of flesh, very level, and of exceptional quality. Lord Rosebery, who seems lucky at running seconds this year, was reserve for the championship with his Aberdeen Angus heifer, Scottish Queen, a very fine specimen of the breed that furnishes well.

Mr. E. Jordan's Leicesters made a good show amongst the long-wooled sheep, but the long-wools did not turn up in such numbers as the Downs, of which there was a very excellent show, South Downs, Hampshire, and Shropshire Downs being remarkably level lots, and the competition in the various classes very keen. Mr. Colman's South Downs, Mr. Mills's Shropshire Downs, and Mr. Buxton's Hampshire Downs, won the breed cups of their respective breeds, and were deservedly admired. Mr. McDowall's Cheviots and Blackfaces also showed to great advantage.

Pigs were not so numerous as on some occasions, but the quality all round was excellent, principal winners being Mr. Hiscock, Mr. Graham, Mr. Pettit, Lord Camurvon, Mr. Ibbotson, and Mr. Brown. The latter gentleman took the champion prize for the best pen of pigs with his cross-breds—Berkshire and Large White—and Mr. Fricker took the championship for single pigs with a Berkshire.

RAITHBY.

TOWN TOPICS.

"The Happy Life."

WE have been looking around very anxiously for a long time trying to discover in whose hands the English drama in the future was likely to rest, and a very discouraging survey it was. It seemed, indeed, that there were no hands at all worthy of being entrusted with so precious a charge. But with the hour generally comes the man; and unless Mr. Parker wofully disappoints us, we may safely look to him to prove one of its custodians. But so far he may be said to have done no more than matriculate. He has yet to pass other and stiffer "exams"; yet he bids fair in due time to take a high Dramatic degree. The promise of "honours" is there—it will be a great disappointment to many if Mr. Parker drops out of the final list.



Photo. by A. Ellis, MISS CISSIE LOFTUS. Upper Baker Street.

"The Happy Life" is by no means a masterpiece. It has many faults and weaknesses, in parts it is strained and unconvincing; but when one has said that, one has said the worst. And, on the other hand, what a charming, fresh, and delightful touch this author has, what a graceful, dainty pen, what a sensitive, nervous feeling for the real and true in sentiment and in humour! Glance at the story of "The Happy Life." Cyril Charteris is a young American. He is American merely because the American market for plays is even more valuable than the English, and the author not unnaturally wishes to make his wares as attractive to his potential customers as possible; otherwise there is no reason in art that Cyril should be an American. There is no question of national temperament or environment. Cyril is a rich, but not excessively rich, young man, who wants to look on life as an outsider. He is not disappointed or sour, he simply seeks "the happy life," and he thinks to find it in aloofness. So he muses quietly in his chambers in the Temple, living mostly in his books, but by no means acting the recluse or misanthrope. Particularly careful is he to steer clear of the influence feminine. He fears it; he himself tells us that he is centuries behind the age, that his ideas regarding the sex are hopelessly old-fashioned. He holds woman in reverence, he thinks of her as something "almost sacrosanct." We soon know that he does not speak idly, that he is in very truth a Bayard, a Galahad, a *preux chevalier*. He sedulously avoids feminine society, for he knows that if ever he does fall beneath the spell of a woman, his fall will be a bad one indeed. There will be no scrambling out again, with merely a few scratches.

And so, of course, the gods scoff at him. It is at his door, one fierce, tempestuous night, that a lovely girl falls fainting. It is his lot to tend her and watch over her through the long hours as she lies back in his bachelor armchair, alone with him. It has all come about very reasonably, though most romantically—it is a speciality of Mr. Parker's, this skilful blending of fantasy with the common-places of life. Evelyn had come to meet her brother, whose rooms are above Cyril's. He had promised to take her to the theatre; but, being a young cad, had not kept the appointment. She had waited and waited, the hours had passed, and yet he had not come. It was getting very late. The building is absolutely deserted, for it is holiday time. She had groped her way down the dark staircase, slipped, struck her head, and fallen unconscious outside Cyril's door.

It is snowing terribly; the Temple is quite empty. He cannot leave to go for assistance; he must watch over her, for she is very ill. And so they are there alone, and when she recovers consciousness the next morning, he takes her home. Here we come to a scene almost cruel, quite masterly in its realism and truth to nature. Evelyn's family is "shabby-genteel," gruesomely shabby and shockingly genteel. It is a chapter from Thackeray; the character painting is superb. The awful cad of a brother; the devastating mother of the most pronounced "paying guest" type; the free and easy sister, whose manners are far worse than her morals, whose speech is out of place, though her heart is not; the poor hack of a father, who skeletonises masterpieces, at thirty shillings a volume, for a halfpenny edition of the classics—all are there, limned by a consummate artist. Mr. Parker's power in the delineation of character is certainly that of a master. Their reception of Evelyn and Cyril is just what we expect from such folk. They hold up their hands in holy horror, and tell the poor girl that her character is gone for ever. Cyril acts like the splendid fellow that he is. He sacrifices everything for the sake of the



Photo. by Lafayette.

MISS DOROTHEA BAIRD.

179, New Bond Street.

woman, and asks permission of her "people" to make Evelyn his wife. They accept this offer with a vulgarly-expressed acquiescence, the brother, who is, of course, the cause of everything, making enquiry as to Cyril's financial position.

The next act is the weakest, and the least original, recalling most obviously Ohnet's "Le Maître de Forges," and many other plays based upon husband and wife loving each other madly, the while each imagines that the other is entirely indifferent. Cyril and Evelyn are both violently unhappy, thinking that the other never ceases to regret bitterly the marriage into which circumstances have forced them. How, at last, they discover the truth, and are brought together, need not be told. The last act, in which happiness is reached, is a very skilful and original piece of work.

What, then, are the faults of so pretty and palatable a play? It is only because the play is on so high a plane that one finds any fault at all; but it is necessary to judge Mr. Parker's work by the highest standard. The chief weakness, then, is in the fact that a man of Cyril's extremely chivalrous

ideas would have conquered circumstances, and, at any cost, obtained a third person to be present during that fateful evening, even running the risk of leaving Evelyn alone for a little while till he could capture somebody from the outer world to keep watch with him. The second fault is that no man and woman could for long continue to live under one roof, loving each other passionately, both believing the other to be actuated by a directly opposite sentiment; the intuition of the woman or the passion of the man would, by subterfuge or appeal, find out the truth. These are merely trifling flaws in a fascinating and delightful work, and will not affect enjoyment of it one iota.

The rendering of the play is in all respects pleasing. Mr. Fred Kerr was a completely satisfying Cyril, earnest but bright, manly but delicate, tender but masculine. Miss Dorothea Baird, as Evelyn, gave to the character just those qualities of interest and girlishness, helplessness and charm that were essential. Mr. Aubrey Boucicault presented a graphic little study of the brother, in its restrained brutality veneered by the smirks and *savoir faire* of the counter-jumper—it was very

clever indeed. Mr. Hermann Vezin made of the poor old hack a pathetic and appealing figure. Miss Henrietta Watson, Mr. Sydney Brough, Mr. Arthur Elwood, Miss Carlota Nillson, a *débutante* from America, and the other members of the cast, were all quite in the picture.

Dramatic Notes.

THE theatrical "slack" season is now upon us, and will last until the Christmas festivities, which, in this hurrying era, begin some time before Boxing Day. With the exception of the production, on Monday evening, of "Charlotte Corday" at the Grand Theatre—which will be referred to in our next issue—with Mr. Kyrle Bellew and Mrs. Brown Potter in the cast, no event of dramatic moment occurs until the presentation of the three fairy plays, founded on stories by the immortal Hans Andersen, at a series of matinées at Terry's Theatre, the first performance of which is due some days before Christmas. Mr. Basil Hood, the author of "The French Maid," and many smart and graceful lyrics, may be expected to provide a bright and amusing entertainment that will please the children and yet be attractive to those of an older growth.

There will be one scene, a Toy Village, that will recall to those whose early youth has passed the "Noah's Arks" of their nursery period, though Mr. Hood fears that his juvenile spectators will not recognise it. In his wanderings through the Lönther Arcade, in search of a model for this scene, he could not discover one of these old-fashioned toys, which have been replaced by elaborate and realistic farmyards, made in Germany, of course. Children have lost their childishness, and their very playthings must be accurate and scientific, and in keeping with the spirit of the age.

The "lesser adults"—there are no more children—are also being catered for at the Court Theatre again, where Humperdinck's strange but fascinating fairy play, "The Children of the King," has been revived at morning performances. The cast is almost exactly the same as that which first interpreted it. Some alteration has been made in the dialogue, with the idea of making the story clearer. In this there is no cause for complaint, but one must demur to the tampering with Humperdinck's score by the addition of two songs—and mediocre songs, too—by another composer.

Miss Cissie Loftus is once again the Goose Girl, and once again plays in that insouciant, appealing fashion that is really alluring. Miss Loftus has not



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NEWMARKET; THE MEMBERS' STAND.

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that art which conceals art, for her performance is absolutely artless—charmingly artless. It is another example of the power of personality in acting, which makes so much more for success than executive power, or the power of delineation. It is this possibility of pleasing without study, technique, or experience, that makes feasible the argument that acting is not an art. Mr. Dion Boucicault repeats his fine performance of the Minstrel, and the other members of the company show a nice perception of the delicate and faerie qualities of the "music-play."

"Lady Ursula," Mr. Anthony Hope's new play—the first he has written "off his own bat"—has just been produced in America with much success. It will be given to London eventually by Mr. Charles Frohman at the Duke of York's Theatre.

Mrs. Bernard Beere will make her first reappearance very shortly at the Comedy in a revival of the old one-act play, "A Sheep in Wolf's Clothing."

A new departure in the harlequinade will be made by Mr. Barrett in "Cinderella" at the Garrick Theatre. Instead of the disconnected incidents that have hitherto done service, the clown, pantaloons, columbine, and the rest will perform an old-fashioned farce. One by one the old things are changing, and the time-honoured harlequinade may be allowed to disappear without regret.

Mr. Robert Buchanan has freely adapted M. Paul Bourget's novel, "André Cornélie," and Mr. Tree has accepted his version for future production at Her Majesty's Theatre. The story is a powerful and tragic one. Mr. Tree will play

the part of a man who marries the wife of him he has killed in a quarrel, and who is himself murdered by the son of his wife and her former husband. Rather than she should know the truth, the dying man accuses himself of suicide; and the woman is left in ignorance of the crime of both husband and son.

The death of Mr. Blakeley robs the stage of an intensely funny comedian. His humour was of a never-changing pattern, but it was none the less laughable on that account, and never failed to prove effective.

Mr. Forbes Robertson has almost completed arrangements to travel, with his company, through the large towns of Germany, playing "Hamlet." The Germans are greater students of Shakespeare even than ourselves, and of all the poet's works "Hamlet" is their favourite, so that the enterprise would start under the happiest auspices.

The next production at the St. James's Theatre will be a new play, "The Conquerors," by the American author, Mr. Paul Potter, who adapted "Trilby." It is a story of the Franco-Prussian War.

Between the Flags

THERE was a time when the end of November and the beginning of December were very busy times in the steeplechasing world. Those were the good old days when such novices as Chandos, Hampton, and Industrious were to be seen out over hurdles, and when, not to mention many useful English recruits, such promising youngsters as Clonave, Woodbrook, Fairwind, and Bacchus, used to come over from Ireland, either to pick up the best of our autumn handicaps, or to get ready for the spring campaign.

It cannot, by any stretch of the imagination, be said that last week's



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OVER THE WATER.

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THE OPEN DITCH.

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racing in any way reminded us of those good old days; and as Mr. George Verrall stood in the grand stand at Gatwick on Tuesday and Wednesday last, however favourably he may have compared that handsome structure with the ramshackle and uncomfortable edifices which adorned his Croydon race-course, he must, I think, have sighed for the sport he never failed to give his patrons on the old Woodside track.

Irish-bred jumpers were much to the fore on the first day of the Gatwick Meeting, as they are certain to be throughout the season, especially in steeplechases. The National Hurdle Race, on which there used once to be a market for weeks before it was run, brought out a field of fair-class hurdlers, including the four year old Sam, 11st. 11lb., the five year old Fossicker, 12st. 5lb., and the two Irish mares, Irish Girl, 4yrs., 10st. 10lb., and Dusky Queen, 6yrs., 11st. 11lb. Dusky Queen has always been a favourite of mine, and I expected her to win this race. However, she found her match in Irish Girl, a sweet daughter of Gallinule, who struggled home half a length in front of her.

The Ruspur Hurdle Race resulted in another victory for Ireland, when Vic got home four lengths in front of Golf Ball and eight others; and then the Irish-bred Westmeath never let poor old Wild Man from Borneo get on terms with him, and beat him easily by two lengths.

On the second day we had the Metropolitan Steeplechase, one of the most important steeplechases of the year when it was run at Croydon. On this occasion, it brought out six very moderate animals, of whom the four year old Balmy was the only one with any pretensions to class, and I doubt if he is any flier. However, he is a good jumper, and he appears to stay a bit, so that he won easily enough, and he will very likely be useful amongst the lot that are running over fences now. He had nothing whatever to beat, Drogheda, giving him 22lb. for the year, being second, and the old "Wild Man," giving 24lb., third. The race was run at a poor pace, and Balmy, who jumped well all the way, won for speed in the last quarter of a mile.

Ford of Fyne, the best stayer in training, and who ran third for last year's Grand National, won a little race at Leicester, and I think he will run well at Liverpool again next March. Anchovy, who is a bit more than useful over sticks, won the Leicester Handicap Hurdle Race, and Sailor King showed that there was some reason for the way in which he was backed at Sandown Park, by beating Stroller and Mum in the Sibley Handicap Steeplechase.

It seems to me that this is almost all there is to say about such a terribly tame and uninteresting week.

OUTPOST.



Photo. Rouch.

SADDLING GOLDFISH.

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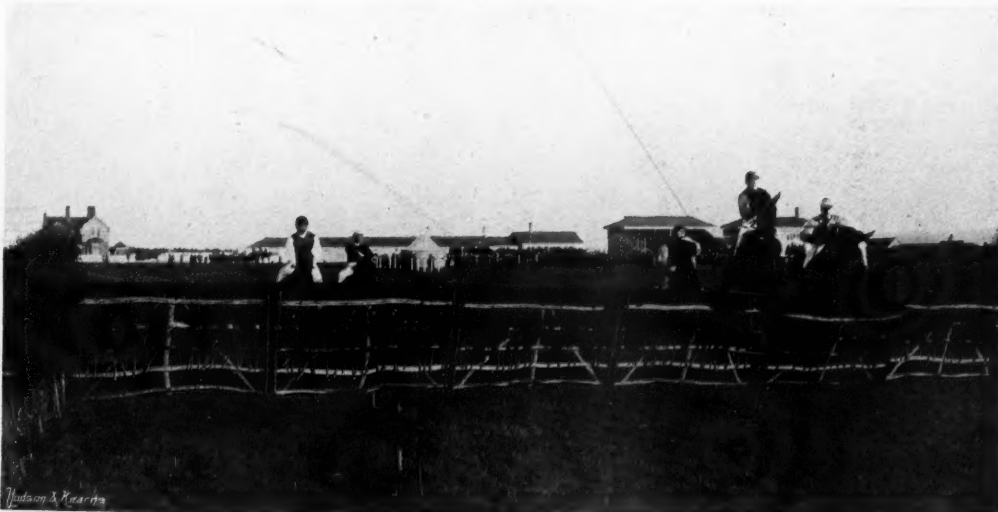


Photo. by W. A. Rouch.

MAKING THE RUNNING.

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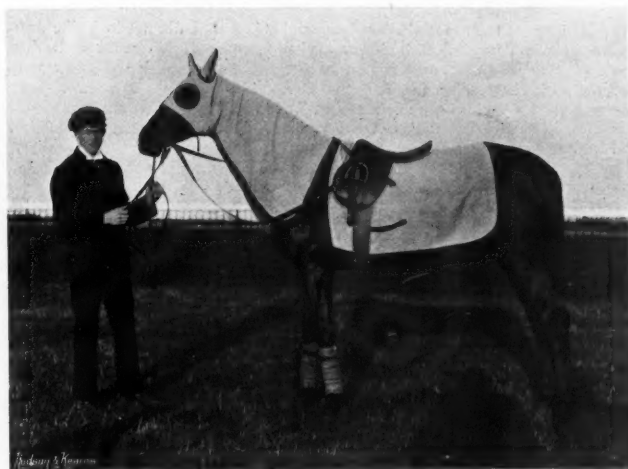


Photo. Rouch.

THE RUSH.

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NEWMARKET STEEPLECHASES.

THE sun shone forth brilliantly on the second day of the Newmarket Steeplechase Meeting, from a cloudless sky. The introduction of the Cheveley Cup, the first of the new flat races, increased the card to seven items. The racing opened at 12.30 with the Camois Steeplechase of two miles and a-half, and the form shown by Lambton II. at Liverpool strongly recommended him. The odds were never in jeopardy, and with Agathos II. tailed off a long way from home, Pousette and Mistress Prue finished, in the order named, first and second.

The Silverley Steeplechase was reduced to a match between Lopy and Fortune, of whom the former did not take the allowance and was conceding 7lb. He did not do badly in the steeplechase won by Camalata on the Tuesday, and after odds of 2 to 1 had been betted upon Fortune, they were reduced to 5 to 4. In the first half mile the latter came to grief, and went on riderless to the paddock, where he was caught and retraced his steps.

Leirion declined the Selling Hurdle Handicap, for which a party of seven had been entered overnight. With Trundley placed *hors de combat* by a fractured rib, Straw Bonnet was ridden by Arthur Nightingall, and the mare both opened and closed a warm favourite from Loot. The chance of Admonition was extinguished when she bolted at the stand turn, and Straw Bonnet played a waiting game until half a mile from home. Then she rapidly closed up, and collaring Loot at the last hurdles, looked like finishing by herself. But Loot struggled on under pressure, while the same cannot be said of Straw Bonnet, who chanced the last hurdles, and eventually succumbed by a length and a-half. The winner tempted no bid, but Mr. A. McMicking afterwards gave 50 guineas for Straw Bonnet.

All the topweights, of whom Clawson had won last year and the year before, were absentees from Crockford's Handicap Steeplechase. Ravenswood came from Ireland with a good character, and, in spite of his somewhat common appearance, was backed down to 5 to 4. This caused the market to open out against the local candidate, Goldfish, and with 4 to 1 easily procurable at the finish, there were plenty of enquiries for Glendarg and Lord Lieutenant. The fate of Ravenswood was sealed a long way from home, and Goldfish had been hard ridden before he closed with Lord Lieutenant and Glendarg in the last half mile. The last-named pair came into collision at the second fence from home, with the result that both went the wrong side of a post. The rider of Glendarg pulled up, but Lord Lieutenant's jockey cut into the course again and disposed of the "plodding" Goldfish. Scarcely had the cheers for Lord Lieutenant died away than the cry of "Objection" was raised, and with no doubt as to the winner having gone wrong, the Stewards quickly awarded the race to Goldfish. With H. Smith lodging a complaint against Pullen on the grounds of foul riding, this was also considered by the Stewards, who found the evidence given very conflicting, and administered a caution to each.

The way had now been prepared for the Cheveley Cup, for which Hattie stood down, but Xylophone and Runnelstone helped Sophos to oppose The

Rush, who was required by the conditions to give the last named close upon a couple of stone. Sophos had not run this year, having been turned out during the summer months, and the only chance of The Rush's defeat was that he might have been affected by his race of the previous Saturday at Manchester. On the sound going he ran a good horse, and with Xylophone and Runnelstone early tailed off, it was apparent a mile from home that Sophos could not get out of the way of The Rush. After they had made the turn in the far corner, six furlongs from home, The Rush was within handy distance of Sophos, whom he passed without an effort, and won hands down. Apart from the monetary value of the race, the Cheveley Cup, which may be made out in our first illustration, is a handsome work of art.

Dr. Bond missed the Selling Handicap Steeplechase, and Brown Tony was established favourite from No Bet and Pollerton Boy, of whom the last named came to grief at the first fence in the Selling Steeplechase of the previous

day. He was at the top of the handicap, and at one time did not look like overhauling Brown Tony. Still, he held a slight advantage as they raced to the final obstacle, and a mistake on the part of Brown Tony enabled Pollerton Boy to run home with half a dozen lengths to spare. The meeting concluded with the Links Plate for maiden three year olds, and The Wake, who ran in a similar class of race at Sandown Park in October, had benefited by subsequent practice, and won with consummate ease.

THE EATON STUD.—II.

THE two most illustrious families in the Stud Book are undoubtedly those founded by Whalebone's two sons—Sir Hercules and Camel. The latter of these was sire of Touchstone, who lived to a ripe old age at the Eaton Stud, whilst to the former we are indebted for the great Birdcatcher line, which, in addition to Oxford and his successful family, gave us the mighty Stockwell, and a countless army of distinguished descendants. This last-named family is now represented at Eaton by Orme, who is, in my opinion, destined to become the greatest sire of the age.

My last article on this stud dealt fully with its sires, and its this year's crop of yearlings—perhaps the best lot that the stud groom, Chapman, has ever sent to Kingsclere—and I intend this week to give a short description of the almost incomparable lot of brood mares which I saw strolling about in the paddock, followed by their highly-bred foals. In doing so, I shall number them according to Bruce Lowe's Figure System, because, to those who understand it, this is by far the best means—indeed, the only one—of giving at a glance a clear and comprehensive appreciation of the value of the different combinations of blood in the pedigree of each. I may remind my readers that 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 represent running families: 3, 8, 11, 12, 14 sire families; and (6), (7), (9), up to (43) the remainder.

A long, low, deep-bodied brown mare was the first that was shown to me. This was Jersey Lily, by Beauclerk (10) out of Tiger Lily (dam of Martagon), by Macaroni 14, and dam of Guernsey, by Bend Or, and Guernsey Lily, by Orme. She has a fine bay colt by Orme, own brother to her beautiful yearling, Sark. This mare belongs to the No. (13) family, so that Orme, who brings in plenty of sire figures and another cross of Agnes blood, ought to suit her well.

In my last article I said a good word for Vampire's yearling colt, Flyin' Fox, by Orme, and I was curious to see his dam. I found her a big, fine, roomy mare, and dam of a beautiful filly foal, by Orme. I was told she is a bad-tempered mare, and had killed her first foal, but she seems to behave better now, and although only eight years old, has already bred that useful two year old, Batt, and the good-looking yearling, Flying Fox. She is by Galopin out of Irony, by Rosebery, and belongs to the famous No. 14 family, so that I think her certain to make a great brood mare.

A very speedy mare when in training was Gantlet (20), by Galopin, who has a fine filly foal by Orme, that looks all over like racing; and another nice young mare that I liked was Conclusion, by Bend Or out of Grace Conroy, who belongs to the No. 3 family. She is in foal to Greyleg, which seems to be inbreeding rather closely to Bend Or, Greyleg's dam, Quetta (6), being by Bend Or out of Dourance, by Rosicrucian. This is, I think, one of the best and handsomest mares I have ever seen, combining beautiful quality with length, depth, and power, and her yearling colt, Frontier, by Orme, is a really good-looking one. She has a very good colt foal by the same sire this year, and has been put to him again.

Grace Conroy 3 is a nice young mare, of the deep, lengthy type, by Sterling out of Rent Day, by Macgregor. She has been mated with Orme, who ought to suit her well. She is the dam of Conclusion, Console, and Conroy. Petal 3, by Hermit out of Gardenia, has also been mated with Greyleg. In fact, this horse has been given a great chance with the six good mares which have visited him, one of which was the sensational St. Leger winner, Throstle 4, by Petrarch out of the famous Thistle (dam of Common, Goldfinch, and others), by Scottish Chief 12. She has a quick-looking colt foal by Orme, that looks like galloping, and she ought to be well suited by Greyleg, especially in point of conformation.

I have seldom seen a better foal than the brown or grey colt by this sire out of Kissing Cup 3, a five year old mare by Hampton out of Sterling Love, by See Saw from True Love, by Sterling. This mare is full of quality, with great reach in front, and her foal combines all the best points both of his sire and dam.

In the next paddock we went into were two beautiful mares. These were



The Taber Syndicate,

Lower St., Piccadilly.

JOCKEYS OF 1897; J. T. SLOAN.

Farewell (16) and Rydal (16). The first of these is a deep-bodied chestnut by Doncaster out of Lily Agnes, with a beautiful bay colt, own brother to Regret, and she has this year visited Best Man. Rydal is a big-boned chestnut, by Bend Or out of Windermere, and, therefore, own sister to Kendal. She has a good bay filly, own sister to Lowood, by St. Serf, whom she has visited again. She is also dam of Blue Water, by Blue Green, and the yearling Underly, by Amphion.

A really beautiful mare is Ornament (16), by Bend Or out of Lily Agnes, and, therefore, sister to Ormonde, a level, lengthy, symmetrical mare, all quality. She is the dam of Labrador, and the two year old Collar, and has a nice filly foal by Best Man. She was put to Sheen again this year.

It would be difficult to find a nicer young mare anywhere than Sandiway 2, by Doncaster 5 out of Clemence, and it was indeed bad luck when her splendid colt-foal by Orme died of tetanus. She has been mated with the same horse again this year. A nice short-legged mare, and full of quality, is Shotover 13, winner of the Two Thousand Guineas and Derby in 1882, by Hermit out of Stray Shot, by Toxophilite, who has visited Melton 8; whilst the compact Ruth 8 (dam of Tarporley), by Scottish Chief out of Hilda; the big, lengthy St. Mary (9) (dam of Seabreeze), by Hermit out of Adelaide, by Young Melbourne; and the two year old Console 3, by Bend Or out of Grace Conroy, have all been mated with Orme; Orlet (16), by Bend Or out of Ruth, with St. Serf—this mare has a nice filly by Amphion; and Bright Alice 4, by Macheath out of Fair Alice, by Cambuscan, who has a capital grey colt by Greyleg, with Bend Or.

Lily Agnes (16), Ormonde's dam, by Macaroni 14 out of Polly Agnes, by The Cure, who is now twenty-six years old, missed last season to Greyleg, and has not been covered this year, fresh and well as she looks; and then I saw the famous Angelica 11, a beautiful, lengthy mare, all quality, by Galopin out of St. Angela, by King Tom, and not only own sister to St. Simon, but also dam of Orme. Her priceless Kendal foal was unfortunately born deformed, and had to be destroyed. She also has not been covered this year.

From this very cursory glance at the breeding and mating of the Eaton mares, my readers will, I hope, be able to understand the past successes of this stud, and to realise its future possibilities; whilst those of them who have studied



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EATON HALL; THE STABLES.

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the Figure System will see at a glance how very well bred, and mated, most of them are to produce great race-horses.

The foundation of the present Eaton Stud was, undoubtedly, Doncaster 5, who represented the good old cross of Birdcatcher 11 and Touchstone 14; in other words, inbreeding to Whalebone, with a cross of Blacklock added. His strongest blood was No. 3, through Stockwell, and being mated with Rouge Rose 7, who also got No. 3 blood through Windhound, he sired Bend Or. It was not, however, until the introduction of the Agnes blood through Windermere (16), by Macaroni 14 out of Miss Agnes, by Birdcatcher 11, and then through Lily Agnes (16), by Macaroni out of Polly Agnes, by The Cure (6) out of Miss Agnes, that the greatest results were achieved. Lily Agnes, who was bred by Mr. James Ennery, brought in three crosses of Blacklock to nick with the one in Bend Or's pedigree, and being mated with that sire, she bred the horse of the century, Ormonde.

There is no doubt that, taking the figures as a test, Ormonde requires strong inbreeding to sire figures in his mates, and a good proof of this is that, mated with Angelica 11, by Galopin 3 out of St. Angela 11, by King Tom 3 out of a grand-daughter of Cain 8, he sired Orme. Whether this horse may not be rather too close to Bend Or to suit the Bend Or mares, of which this stud is so full, is a matter of opinion which only time can decide, but, at any rate, he gets the best-looking and most promising stock I have seen anywhere, and I feel sure that he is bound to make a great sire.

THE JOCKEYS OF 1897.

AMONG the flood of statistics which we have learnt, by experience, to expect at the close of every racing season, the lists of winning owners, trainers, and jockeys occupy a prominent place. The ordinary Turf scribe, who, when the racing season is over, has to fall back on sport under the National Hunt Rules, is in much the same position as the Israelites who had to make bricks without straw—at any rate, when the illegitimate sport is no better than it has been this year up to now—so what wonder that he is glad to make the most of the opportunities provided by the statistics of the season.

With regard to the jockeys who have been riding with more or less success this year, perhaps the less said the better. When one remembers those who were riding not so many years ago—Fordham, Tom Cannon, Fred Archer,



Photo. by W. A. Rouch.

GREYLEG.

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John Osborne, Constable, Goater, and others—their successors do not shine by comparison, and I certainly agree with a well-known North Country trainer, who said to me last summer that there was only one really good jockey riding now, and that was Watts. It is needless for me to say anything here about this jockey's riding. His statuesque style and finished horsemanship, learnt in that best of all schools, Danebury, are well known to all those who ever go racing, and in spite of his increasing weight, he has scored on no fewer than forty-six occasions during the season just passed. Of course, Mornington Cannon heads the list with 145 wins out of 624 mounts, whilst his brother Kempton, who is not only a good horseman, but a clever jockey too, has also done well. Kempton Cannon shines especially in the art of handling nervous or irritable horses, and the shifty Goletta has always run better for him than for anyone else. He also rode a very good race on Comfrey in the Cambridgeshire, and there is a great future before him.

S. Loates, who has had a great season, comes next to M. Cannon, with only nine fewer winning mounts. He has ridden a number of winners for M. Lebaudy's stable, and his handling of Chiselhampton in the Liverpool Autumn Cup was much admired. His brother Tom was, unfortunately, kept out of the saddle until July, from the effects of his last year's accident, but he has ridden thirty-four winners all the same, one of whom was Ayah, the filly on whom he stole the Champagne Stakes, at Doncaster.

Bradford, who has ridden in 464 races, has, on sixty-one occasions, caught the judge's eye first, and, though he has not been so successful as he was when only riding lightweights, he may be expected to do better again next year. Two jockeys whose riding I have much admired have been Collins and Sharples. The former of these, who hails from Yorkshire, is a beautiful horseman, and if he does not get too heavy, has a great future before him; whilst the latter showed, by the cool and resolute manner in which he handled Merman in the Cesarewitch, that he has all the makings of a great jockey.

One of the principal features of the season has been the return of C. Wood to the saddle, for he certainly seems to ride a great deal better now than he did ten years ago. Perhaps this does not say much for the form of the jockeys riding now as compared with those a decade back.

The principal fault in the riding of the jockeys of the present day is that they seem to have no knowledge of pace. If one of them is told to "wait" he will generally do so by staying behind his field, however slowly they may be going, until they begin to turn on the steam, when it is generally too late, or takes too much out of his horse, to get up. If told to "go along," he will, as likely as not, go tearing away in front, however fast the race may be run, and, probably, ride his horse to a standstill. The place to "wait" is in front, if the others will let you; and supposing one wants a fast run race, there is no object in bucketing one's own horse to make a pace if the others will do it for you. But this is where knowledge of pace comes in, and that is where the American jockey, Sloan, can give all ours such a lot of weight. Whether his style of riding is as good as ours, or calculated to get as much out of a horse in a finish, matters very little indeed, it is the way in which he rides his races all through that is the secret of his success.

In America, where he learnt to ride, all fast gallops and trials, as well as races, are ridden against the "clock," and it seems to me only natural to suppose that by this means anyone must, in time, learn to judge better what pace he is going than by riding gallops without any check as to time at all. How often I have known a trainer, after watching a gallop, think they have come along at a good pace, whereas the lads riding have said that it was dead slow all the way, and *vice versa*. In fact, I have often known jockeys riding in the same race disagree afterwards as to whether it was a fast gallop or not.

The only way in which to make certain of winning a race, supposing one's horse is good enough, is to ride him so that he does the distance in the fastest time he is able to. For this his jockey has to know exactly what pace he is going all the way, and as long as he does this, and rides him accordingly, he can afford to more or less neglect the rest of the field; but this can only be learnt to perfection by constant riding again & time.

There is where Sloan is so good. He nearly always gets off in front, and there he always stays, as long as the others will let him do so without making



Hawkins and Co., MORNINGTON CANNON.

Brighton.



H. R. Sherborn,

SAM LOATES.

Newmarket.

his horse go faster than he knows he ought to. If he has to pull back, he does so, but still keeps his horse going at the speed which he knows will get him to the winning-post in the shortest time possible.

It is obvious that this style of riding requires a very accurate judgment of pace on the part of its exponents, which is what Sloan possesses in such a remarkable degree, and of which our jockeys are so lamentably deficient.

When our trainers give up their narrow-minded, old-fashioned prejudices, and copy the Americans by clocking all their fast work, they will form much more reliable opinions as to the fitness and form of their horses, make fewer mistakes than they do now about their trials, and educate a very superior race of jockeys to those who are riding now.

The fact is, that a false standard of excellence has been set up for the young jockeys of the present day to imitate. The fetish of "waiting" is held up to them as the one thing necessary, and half of them don't know what it means. To stay as far behind as possible until it is too late even to get to the front may be thought very clever, but it is hardly the best way to win races.

OUTPOST.

A COURSING REMINISCENCE.

"HOW are you, Jack? I am right pleased to see you," exclaimed my uncle, Richard Cranswick, as I alighted from his dogcart one chill October afternoon.

"Come into the house, lad, and take your wraps off," he continued, still shaking my hand vigorously; and, obeying this hospitable mandate, I speedily divested myself of my outdoor impedimenta, and, amid my uncle's repeated expressions of pleasure at my arrival, I was soon ensconced before a roaring fire in what he old-fashionedly termed the "parlour."

Dalby Warren, where Uncle Dick lived, is one of those low, roomy, rambling old farmhouses which they used to build in Lincolnshire when farmers were content to pay £4 an acre for their land, and could afford to follow fox-hounds as well as support them. In our days, although the majority of farmers support their pack by preserving foxes, only a very small percentage of those who look exclusively to agriculture for a livelihood can afford to actively participate in the sport.

My arrival at Dalby was in response to a pressing invitation from my uncle to come and spend a few days, partly that I might put to practical test the merits of two four year olds, of whom great things were expected, but chiefly, from his point of view, to take part in some coursing, and watch the trials of some saplings upon whose success his heart was very much set.

No one could remain long in Dick Cranswick's house in ignorance of the fact that its occupant was a votary of the leash. As soon as you entered the hall you were confronted with old-time prints and engravings of famous coursing matches. In the dining-room the sideboard was laden with cups and trophies won in many a hard-run trial; whilst in my uncle's own snuggerly the walls were literally covered with paintings—good, bad, and indifferent—of his favourite dogs. Uncle Dick could, and on very slight provocation would, tell the history of any or all of these portraits, and most of these legends I had at one time or another heard; but one night, as we were sitting smoking our pipes after a long day's coursing, I noticed one which had never previously attracted my attention.

It was one of the ordinary type, a fawn and white-grey hound standing with a dead hare at his feet, in what appeared to be a boundless expanse of green, the only distinguishing feature being a small jar painted in one corner and inscribed "jelly." Under the influence of a hard day and a good dinner Uncle Dick was beginning to nod, so, thinking that it would be better to let him talk me to sleep than let him go to sleep himself, and knowing that the only way to

keep him awake was to start him on his favourite topic, I began, "What is that fawn and white dog over there, uncle?" pointing to the picture.

"That?" he interrogated, glancing up at it. "That's Verdant Green—you remember Verdant Green?—good dog—very," and so saying he closed his eyes once more.

"What's that pot of jelly there for, then?" I said, determined not to be baulked. "Is it to make the hare more appetising for him?"

This had the desired effect, for at the mention of jelly my uncle roused up, and having had his subject found for him, settled down to his work, and related the following story—forty minutes without a check:—

"It's a wonder I never told you the story of Verdant Green," he began, "and how he ran for the Holbeck Cup with the assistance of Lawrence's pick-me-up jelly. He was a dog of my own breeding, by the Waterloo winner Greenhythe, his mother the well-known Black but Comely, a big, overgrown, somewhat weakly puppy, and for that reason I never ran him until he was two years old. In his first outing in public he was unfortunate in meeting the ultimate winner of the stake in the first round, and got beaten after a rattling course. His next public appearance was at Wellborough, where he was entered for the principal event, the Holbeck Cup, a thirty-six dog stake.

"The draw for the cup used to take place at the Reindeer, at Wellborough, the night before the meeting commenced, and there was always plenty of overnight betting, so that a dog could very easily be backed to win a comfortable sum. At that time my nearest neighbour was a man named Lawrence, who used to live at Sands House. He was a reserved, taciturn man, and I used to see very little of him, save when the one trait which we had in common—a mutual love of coursing—brought us together. That year he was lucky enough to possess a real good dog, a black, called Lightning Conductor. This dog was entered for the Holbeck Cup, and on the night of the draw he was, partly by the weight of Lawrence's money, made favourite. My dog was among the any-price division, and I took one or two long shots about him taking the stake, but only to very small amounts, and then backed him at two to one for his first course. Verdant was the only dog I had running, so, as Lawrence only had Lightning Conductor, it was arranged that they should both go in one cab with my man. To make a long story short, they both got through the first three rounds, and that was as far as the cup was run on the first day.

"On the morning of the second day we began the fourth round, and whilst Lightning Conductor had a bye, Verdant only won his course after a fearful gruelling. Lawrence's dog had but to win one more course now to meet mine in the final; and it was when he came up to take his dog from my man that he gave him the jelly, saying, 'You give this to your dog, and it will act like magic. It's the grandest pick-me-up I know of for a dog that's a bit beat; pulls him together.' Having given his dog to the slipper, Lawrence and I watched the trial together. And a good course it was, the hare being turned half a dozen times, but eventually his dog won with a point or two in hand.

"Together we returned to the cab, and as he gave his dog up he said, 'You haven't given Verdant all that jelly, have you, Jock?'

"Indeed, I have, sir," replied Jock. 'I thought I had to.'

"Oh, it's all right," replied Lawrence, 'only I meant giving some to my dog; but it can't be helped now.'

"Having seen Lightning Conductor put to rights, we returned to watch the coursing until the time should come to send our dogs to the slips for the final. That time at length arriving, we repaired to the cab, not, however, before Lawrence had again backed his dog for a large amount.

"As soon as we reached the cab, Jock set off to the slipper with my dog, and Lawrence followed with Lightning Conductor, whilst I went to interview the bookmakers with a view to hedging some of my long shots.



Hawkins and Co.,

CHARLES WOOD.

Brighton.

"No time was lost after the dogs went to the slips, for a stout hare getting up, the trial began immediately. It does not need much description. Lightning Conductor, after being very slow out of the slips, ran all the way like a stuffed dog, and was eventually beaten without scoring a point.

"Even before the course was over I could hear Lawrence as he elbowed his way through the crowd towards me, and, as soon as he got within reach, he yelled, 'You're a thief, Cranswick, you're a thief! You've hocussed my dog; you've poisoned him!' and with these words he let go at me as hard as he could with his stick. I dodged the blow, and, before he had time to repeat it, our landlord, Lord Edenthorpe, who had witnessed what had taken place, stepped forward and interfered.

"There will be a meeting of the stewards at the Reindeer to-night," he said, "and if you have any complaint to make, Mr. Lawrence, make it then."

"Lawrence's friends now led him away, whilst I made my escape in a cab with Jock and Verdant, amid the execration of the crowd, who evidently thought I had nobbled Lightning Conductor.

"Soon after I had got back to my rooms I received a note from Lawrence, saying that he had decided to proceed no further in the case. This I thought was hardly satisfactory after the publicity which had already been given to the matter, so I communicated with the stewards, who thereupon ordered Mr. Lawrence to appear that night. And so appear he did, and, after expressing his regret at having to bring such a charge against a neighbour, he produced veterinary evidence to prove that the dog had been poisoned, and then proceeded to show that no one else had been near the dog but my man and myself.

"At this point things certainly looked black against us, and people were already looking askance at me, when Jock came up for examination. He had a very straight tale to tell, and one which entirely altered the complexion of affairs. He commenced with the startling admission that he certainly had poisoned the dog, but, he added, he had done so through the agency of Mr. Lawrence's own pick-me-up jelly. His suspicions, it appeared, had been aroused when Lawrence gave him the jelly, and so, instead of giving it to Verdant, he had emptied the contents of the jar into a piece of paper and put it in his pocket. Noting that Lightning Conductor was somewhat exhausted by his course in the semi-final, he had thought that, possibly, Mr. Lawrence would like him to have some of his own recipe, and had thereupon given the unhappy animal the contents of the jar, with the result above recorded.

"Lawrence seemed quite knocked out by this statement, and as he had no defence to make, he was suspended by the stewards, pending a report of the case being made to the proper quarter.

"I returned to my rooms that night between eleven and twelve o'clock,

and was just off to bed when a cab rolled up, and I was informed that there was a dying man at the hospital who wished to see me. In a state of considerable trepidation I jumped into the cab, and within five minutes was standing on the hospital steps. Here I found Lawrence, who had arrived at that moment, and without a word we entered the building together.

"Inside we were met by a doctor, who briefly explained that a man, in an advanced state of intoxication, had been knocked down that evening by an excursion train in Wellborough Station, and had received such injuries that it was impossible for him to live more than a few hours. He had lately returned to consciousness, and had expressed a wish to see Lawrence and myself; and as he had given the addresses at which we were staying, we had been sent for forthwith. Without further parley we were now shown into the dormitory where the dying man lay, and both immediately recognised one of the regular hangers-on of coursing and race meetings—a man known to most greyhound men by the sobriquet of Pincher.

"Poor Pincher! His mis-spent life was almost over, and he knew it. But loafer and drunkard though he was, he was no coward, but calmly faced the inevitable, and in spite of the fearful pain which he was in, he told his miserable little story without flinching.

"I will not weary you by repeating verbatim all that he said, but the gist of it was this:—Pincher had been bribed by a party of bookmakers, who were bad against Lightning Conductor, but whose names he would not divulge, to 'get at' Lawrence's dog, and, he explained with many apologies, he made several attempts to do this, which were foiled owing to the fact that Jock, canny but too suspicious Scotsman that he was, sat all the time in the cab with the dogs. His opportunity came, however, when Lawrence and I came up before the final course, as, on seeing us approach, Jock thrust his head out of the window, and Pincher simultaneously thrust his in on the opposite side, and presented to the ill-starred Lightning Conductor a piece of meat, on which was sprinkled some drug which had been procured for him by his employers.

"He had hardly finished his story, when he again lapsed into unconsciousness, and the doctor told us that we could retire, as it was improbable that he would rally again. Which surmise was correct, for I heard that he passed away the following morning without recovering consciousness.

"Lawrence and I walked away from the hospital together, and it was some time before either of us spoke. At last, holding out my hand, I asked whether we were to meet as friends in future.

"Yes," he replied, fervently grasping my hand, 'thanks to poor Pincher's accident, we shall. But before ever I present you with any more of my patent jelly, I'll—well, I'll eat the lot myself.'"

ALAN F. TURNER.

Some Foxhounds.

THESE three couples and a-half of foxhounds, posed beside the top of a stone arch, are selected from the Lanark and Renfrew pack, and it is clear that neither master, Major Robertson Aikman, nor huntsman, Harry Judd, need be ashamed that these sun-painted portraits should go out into the world. The picture may be described as a study in heads and forequarters; and, as such, it is remarkably pleasing and characteristic. Rounded ears, an illustration of cruelty inflicted for kind reasons, undoubtedly detract from the general appearance of the hounds; but the rounding is requisite to prevent the exposure of an unnecessary area of tender surface to injury by blackthorns and brambles, and the case is emphatically not one of interfering with Nature. For the foxhound is an artificial product, and a triumph of scientific breeding. Ears apart, those thoughtful heads and intelligent eyes, those long noses with square-cut nostrils, make a delightful picture, and there is no doubt left upon the mind that the whole pack, if these be fair specimens of it, is "suity" and harmonious in appearance, as, no doubt, it is melodious in its music. Of forelegs, straight



Photo. by C. Reid.

A STUDY IN HEADS.

Copyright.

and powerful, turning a little inwards, if anything, the third hound from the left gives a good illustration, though some critics might pronounce him over-broad in chest. A very sage person, I imagine, is the recumbent gentleman in the centre; his whimper no doubt commands respectful attention.

AUTUMN GRAYLING.

IT is only those whose "lines" are laid far away from the life and bustle of the city that can fully appreciate the charms of grayling fishing in autumn. A dull day with a grey sky, and a pall of filmy mist hiding the heather-clad moorland across the valley from our view, does not look very promising, but, donning the waders, we decide to risk it. The river glides dark and clear under the overhanging willows, now yellow with fading foliage, and the water is at low summer level, leaving exposed the twisted roots of the trees on the bank. Passing the weir above the mill, over which the water to-day barely trickles, we walk down to a favourite glide before commencing operations. Here the water shallows from the golden gravel, forming a stream under the opposite bank dearly loved by grayling, and memories come to us of previous days when the silvery fish rose freely to the fly, and the result of two hours' fishing was twenty-eight beautiful grayling in the very pink of condition. Putting the split cane rod together, and selecting for our cast a red tag, a bumble, and a willow, we

wade quietly across, and after a few preliminary casts drop the flies close to the overhanging bank. A dimple a few yards down shows a rising fish, and at the second attempt we catch a passing glimpse of a grey shadow; the line is instinctively tightened, and we are fast in a lively little half-pound grayling. How he struggles for liberty as we drag him towards the gravel, whilst the crimson leaves of the beeches fall swirling on the stream, telling, alas! of the rapid approach of winter. Slipping the net under him, we pause a moment to admire him lying quiescent, poised in mid-air, with the gleaming water dripping and sparkling on the meshes of the net. A faint odour of thyme—or is it of cucumber?—arises from the fish, as we disengage the hook from his mouth, and again admire the shapely contour of the handsome fish, with his long, slender body tapering gracefully to the broad forked tail, the big dorsal fin like transparent fluted tortoise-shell, and the beautifully blended tints of lilac-green and gold on his silvery sides. Wading across the river, we try a cast above, and a

slight tremor of the line indicates that a fish has touched the fly. Three or four other casts, and a quick twist of the wrist, followed by the splashing of a bigger fish, makes us reel up; but, alas! just as the landing-net is nearing him the hold gives, and he glides away into deeper water. Fishing carefully up the thin water, three more grayling are added to the basket, and we move down to a stream divided from the main channel by a huge bank of shingle. Wading across the head of the stream, where ridges of dead leaves are caught on the shallows, and where the water gurgles over the pebbles, we see the fish rising at the edge of the rough water, and the first cast succeeds in hooking a grayling. He is added to the basket, and then several salmon "smolts" hook themselves on the red tag, and are, of course, returned to the water. These handsome little fish, with their green and gold speckled and barred bodies, are a nuisance to the grayling at this time of the year, as they rise freely to the fly, and also take the worm. Exhausting this stream, we wade out into the main channel, and here the water rushes madly against the waders, making wading a matter of considerable difficulty. The sun struggles through the mist, and causes a deceptive glitter on the water, preventing us from seeing where the flies are.

Fish, too, are rising short, and the fickle nature of the grayling becomes apparent, as for nearly an hour not a single fish is added to the basket. Is it this fickleness that has earned for the grayling the sobriquet of the "lady of the streams," I wonder? After trying two more likely glides without success, a seat is found on the trunk of a half-decayed tree washed down by the previous floods, and we fall into a quiet reverie as we gaze on the quaint old ruins of the Abbey. Then, the beauties of the wild Northern scenery, through which the river winds its course to the sea, afford us pleasure. The glorious autumn foliage, the brilliant red of the beeches contrasting with a pale band of yellow-leaved poplars, the russet orange of the oaks, and the golden brown of the larches, all commingle to form a charming picture of ever-changing beauty as the lights and shadows come and go. Surely the dreams and recollections that pervade one's mind, the grand scenery of the cold and rugged North, and the constantly varying scenery of the river-side, give the greatest charms and delights to the angler's pursuit, and prevent it from being the monotonous sport that it at first sight appears to be to the outsider. An old cock pheasant crosses the river on his way to a stubble, his metallic plumage gleaming in the watery rays of the pale sunshine; a water ouzel, disturbed at our approach, takes to flight, and, circling round, makes his way up stream, where, on a half-submerged boulder, his white breast forms a spot of colour. Once, too, a king-fisher flashes past beneath the yellow foliage of the willows, the gleam of turquoise blue disappearing round a bend of the stream. Shots are heard in a field adjoining the river, and immediately afterwards a covey of partridges skim across the water; one with a leg down lags behind the rest, and is evidently hard hit.

The sound of the water rushing over the shingly shallow fills our ears, the filmy mist thickens, and the sunlight is shut out, whilst the water

takes a deeper tinge. The air, too, becomes somewhat colder as we resume our sport, trying the worm instead of the fly. The tiny cork float rides the mimic waves bravely, but without a stoppage until near the end of the stream; then a slight halt, a quick but gentle strike, and a nice grayling is making his best bid for liberty, but without avail, and he is added to the basket. Rebaiting the hook with a well-scoured red worm, the bait is again cast into the waste of waters where the stream is flecked with yellow foam as it swirls round into an eddy. Again and again is the bait cast into the thin water, but without effect, and we again have recourse to the fly.

We fish fully half of a likely stretch of water before getting another rise, although grayling are dimpling the surface at frequent intervals. Then in succession come three short rises, and at last the fly is taken under water. A dull pull at the line, and we are fast in the best fish of the day, who, directly he feels the barbed steel, fights vigorously. Bringing him gently to the edge of the shelving bank of shingle, the net is slipped beneath him, and this handsome, symmetrical fish, gleaming with moisture like a bar of molten silver, is placed with his companions. Contrary to the canons of angling, we now fish down stream, and add another brace of small fish to our catch, missing several others that rise short. We decide only to fish down to a favourite spot where the water shallows into a broad stream, after it has been increased in volume by the influx of a noisy little beck that breathes to us of heather and grouse. Tumbling and flashing over its boulder-strewn bed, the amber water colours the clearer river for many yards of its course. The banks of the beck are still green with moss and ferns, and the reddish-brown roots of the alders twist and twine in varied contortions under the bank. A small patch of grey lichen-covered rocks is shrouded in bracken and yellow fronds of decaying ferns, whilst the russet-tinted leaves have drifted to the side of the stream, and revolve slowly in the eddy. The dead leaves come rustling down, the brown keys of the ash sway idly in the slight breeze that sighs for a moment amongst the pines, and then dies away into utter silence. The gurgle of the beck and the subdued murmur from the river are the only sounds that break the silence, except the occasional crow of a pheasant as he flies up to his roosting-place, or the far-off rattle of wheels over a stretch of newly-metalled road. As the mist thickens and comes in denser clouds up the valley, we take the split cane down, wind the cast round the hat, and, emptying the creel on to the shingle, gaze with delight on our hardly-earned six brace of grayling. Replacing the fish in the basket, we tramp homewards across the mist-shrouded meadows, where the cattle loom out of the fog, gigantic in size, through the quaint Yorkshire stone stiles, and past the solitary beeches, where the carpet of crimson-brown leaves deepens in colour near the trunks, and gradually fades away into the green of the meadow at the edge of the shadows. Patches of yellow light strike out into the mist as we pass through the village; and the bark of Dan, our favourite retriever, as he recognises our footsteps is a welcome sound, tired as we are by the uphill tramp in waders from the river-side.

ARDAROS.

AN ORCHID FARM.

ORCHIDS are veiled in mystery to strangers in the world of flowers. The veil has lifted a little as the wonderful plants have become more familiar, but the regal family, filled with beautiful and sometimes grotesque children, retains much of its fascinating spell. They dwell in many quarters of the globe—in rich tropical forests, colouring the tree tops with brilliant flowers, bask on some sea-sprayed rock, where no shelter screens the plants from a fierce sun, and revel in the lush meadows of Britain, where kingcup and lady's smock gladden the land in bright spring days.

It is indeed a strange family, absolutely distinct, curiously constructed, and with members so unlike that one can scarcely realise a relationship exists. High up on the forest jungle trees, or nearer the earth, the traveller sees flowers as diversified in form as in their rainbow hues—here great sprawling petals issuing from tufts of leaves, supported by the warmth and



Photo. by L. W. Green.

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A DELICATELY-COLOURED ORCHID (*Cattleya labiata alba cerulea*).

Photo. by L. W. Green.

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GROUP OF THE TRUE CATTLEYA LABIATA (*C. l. vera*).

moisture of the jungle, there a gaudy floral butterfly waving to and fro to attract some insect friend. The family is divided, broadly, into two great groups—those that require soil for their sustenance, and the epiphytal kinds, which live on the tree trunks and branches. These interesting phases of Orchid life are revealed in Messrs. Sander's nursery, or farm, we may well call it, at St. Albans. The immense houses, filled with rare species and varieties, testify to the popularity of the regal flower and its wealthy enthusiasts. Many priceless gems have gone from St. Albans to enrich the valuable collections of Sir Trevor Lawrence, Bart., Baron Schroeder, the Rothschilds, the Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain, M.P., and other well-known names in the ranks of horticulturists.

This great Orchid farm commenced in a moderately humble way some twenty years ago, and now covers many acres. It is one of the largest nurseries in the world, one house measuring no

less than 300ft. long and 26ft. wide, filled with exotics of rare and beautiful kinds. The nursery is a revelation, and surprises are in store for the visitor at every turn. No matter whether snow covers the ground, or March winds blow, flowers give one hearty greeting, their duration both on the plant and when gathered for the house adding to their value. A dainty white blossom, called *Dendrobium Dearei*, from the Philippine Isles, will remain spotless for three months, unless withered by London fogs, as distressing to the Orchid as to suffering humanity.

Orchids are as fickle as coy Phyllis of Seddings' delightful song, and exhibit strange ways, not a few even flowering out of doors in summer, suspended from the trees, others needing constant care to gain floral reward.

Plenty of Orchids, however, will thrive even in a cool greenhouse, and in this throng is the Princess of Wales's flower (*Odontoglossum Alexandræ*), which possesses fascinating beauty, its blossoms, arranged on slender stems, being sought for eagerly when choice decorations are desired.

Mr. Sander, the Orchid king, as he has not inaptly been christened, is as interesting as his flowers, and can recount many tales that seem more like legends culled from some old book of travel than actual facts, but we know them to be true. The whole of the explored world is known to the travellers of this enterprising nurseryman, and it is through their agency that the St. Albans collection has been so abundantly enriched. Into the far recesses of the jungle, in practically unknown lands, where fever and snakes lurk, these intrepid men seek out the flowers for exportation, the cases of Orchids, varying from 15 to 100 each week, arriving from the twelve men employed by Mr. Sander in various parts of the world—New Guinea, Borneo, Guatemala, Madagascar, or elsewhere. One can judge of the expense Orchid collecting entails, when each man costs, on an average, nearly £2,000 yearly, and there is not the slightest check upon them. Frenchmen are sent to Madagascar, and Englishmen to the lands under British control. Mr. Sander offered a reward of £1,000 in Calcutta for a growing plant of an Orchid that has become almost extinct (*Cypripedium Fairieanum*), a beautiful flower which the writer once saw some years ago, but it has never relished hothouse life, hence its disappearance from English gardens. Forsterman, a traveller who endeavoured to discover the little gem twenty years ago, underwent terrible hardships. He was made prisoner by a wandering Indian tribe, compelled to join them in their mountain fights with neighbouring foes, and escaped into a rough country, where wild beasts nearly finished his earthly existence.

Mr. Sander has introduced, through his intrepid travellers, so many lovely flowers, that our task in selecting a few of the more notable is not easy. Every Orchid enthusiast remembers



Photo. by L. W. Green.

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THREE LADY SLIPPERS (*Cypripedium*).

the rich "find" of *Dendrobium Phænopsis* var *Schroederianum*, the Elephant Moth Dendrobe, named after the popular Baron Schroeder, whose collection at The Dell, Egham, is one of the most priceless in the world. This Orchid is as graceful as it is charming in colouring. The flowers, varying from crimson through paler shades to almost pure white, are like big moths resting on the slender stems. Its discovery was almost romantic. Large masses of it were found in the country of the Papuans, New Guinea, flourishing in the sacred "cemetery" of the natives, the flowers colouring the bones of the dead with glorious hues. The natives grew troubled at this disturbance of their ancestors' resting-place, but brass wire and things the blacks delight to see won their affections; so much so, that Mr. Sander's collector received their ready help to store away the plunder, provided the native god was despatched with the plants, as, we suppose, a peace-offering for thus rudely disturbing the place of sepulture, or to watch over the floral gifts. One lovely variety was growing out of the eye socket of a human skull—a gruesome contrast indeed. The splendid consignments, with one or two native gods, were sold by the well-known auctioneers, Messrs. Protheroe and Morris, of Cheapside, and attracted crowds of purchasers and on-lookers.

The Orchid family has, through Mr. Sander's strenuous exertions and his band of collectors, been brought within the knowledge of almost every lover of exotic flowers. He has imported many hitherto almost lost species, amongst those that will ever be remembered in connection with the firm being the brilliant autumn-flowering *Cattleya labiata*, an Orchid that brightens the house when few kinds are in bloom, such lady slippers as *Cypripedium Mastersianum*, *C. Rothschildianum*—named after Lord Rothschild—*C. Chamberlainianum*, *C. i. Sanderæ*, *C. i. Sanderianum*, the white *Lælia anceps*, *Vanda Sanderiana*, a remarkable Orchid which created a sensation when introduced a few years ago, and a host of others.

Many hundreds of pounds have sometimes been acquired by private individuals who have purchased Orchids at the sale-rooms or the nursery from plants which the collector has not seen in flower. On one occasion, when a large consignment of *Cypripedium insigne* came over—the Orchid that an amateur can grow in his greenhouse with success—Mr. Sander noticed one plant with a yellow flower stalk, instead of the normal brown of the type. This was reserved, and when the flower expanded it was of a golden colour, a splendid addition to the list of novelties. Mr. Sander divided the treasure, selling one half for one hundred guineas to a private purchaser, and the other portion for the same sum publicly. The purchaser divided his plant when it had grown considerably, and sold two pieces at one hundred guineas each, whilst Mr. Sander bought back a plant for two hundred and fifty guineas, which was used for hybridising, that is, crossing with other kinds to gain fresh forms.



Photo. by L. W. Green.

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THE AIR PLANT (*Aerides*).

The hybridising department at St. Albans is not the least interesting feature of the nursery. Thousands of unflowered hybrids may be seen in perfect health, children of parents famed for their beauty. Who can say how many rich jewels are in this throng?

Mr. Sander has about one hundred houses in Belgium. The nursery is at St. Andre, seven minutes' walk from the quaint city of Bruges, and delightfully situated. Here may be seen the largest stock of Bays and Azaleas in Belgium, which means much, considering that Belgium is the country of Azaleas and decorative plants. Deutzias, Palms, Dracænas, Aralias, and all the finest decorative plants are grown at St. Andre, besides thousands of Orchids, particularly Dendrobiums, Odontoglossums, and Cattleyas.

We might write much concerning the splendid new, fine-foliaged plants introduced by Mr. Sander, but for the present sufficient has been told to give readers an idea of the immense industry that flourishes at St. Albans. We may, however, mention *Dracæna Sanderiana*, which will probably for ever be grown largely for market. No fine-leaved plant so vigorous, stately, and beautiful in leaf colouring has been introduced for many years. *D. Godseffiana*, named after Mr. Sander's manager, is another delightful plant for its leaf colouring, and no article



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THE BIRD'S-BEAK ORCHID (*Oncidium ornithorhynchum*).

written of this nursery is complete without mentioning the handsome foliage plant in form and colour, *Heliconia illustris rubricaulis*. But we must close our notes, hoping on some future occasion to write of this nursery and its owner, who has brought a wealth of fair exotic flowers to our shores.

Our illustrations are of plants photographed in the St. Albans nursery, and represent choice and easily-grown Orchids. That of Lady Slippers represents the beautiful *Cypripedium Leeanum giganteum* and a hybrid kind (centre flower) named C. Charles Steinwitz.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HAWK AND RABBITS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The letter in a recent issue of *COUNTRY LIFE*, from Mr. F. Adams, suggests to me an incident that I once witnessed, in which a hawk and not a weasel but some rabbits were the actors. My attention was first drawn to the little drama by hearing the squeals of a young rabbit, which, at first, I supposed to be caught in a trap; but, looking in the direction from which the cries came, I saw the flapping wings of a bird, which I at once recognised as a hawk, rising and pouncing

again on a small rabbit that was jumping hither and thither out of the way of the hawk's attack, and squealing piteously the while. Its squeals had the effect of calling up other witnesses and helpers in the persons, first of one, and then of a second, full-grown rabbit. On the arrival of the first rabbit, who seemed to run up to its young one with the object of covering it, with its own body, from the hawk's attacks, the latter appeared disposed to continue the onset, but the arrival of the second full-grown and able-bodied rabbit proved too much for the hawk's courage, and it made off, allowing Monsieur, Madame, et Bébé to retire, with all the honours of war, into the shelter of their "briar-patch," which they lost no time in doing. I presume that, but for the timely arrival of the parents, little Master Rabbit would soon have succumbed to the blows of the hawk's wings and talons, and doubtless it owed its life to the excellence of its lungs and the promptness with which its parents answered its cries for help. It was an interesting little scene. After all, however, I am afraid it will not throw much light on the question that Mr. Adams asks about hawks and weasels. Indeed, on looking over my letter, I am afraid it may remind you of the ancient story of the man who, when he was asked whether he knew German, replied that he did not, but that he had a cousin who played the German flute. There is not much more connection between your correspondent's letter and my own, but the former suggested to my recollection the scene that I witnessed some years ago, and it is possible that it may interest somebody.—COUNTRYMAN.

TOE-WEIGHTS FOR HORSES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I think it may interest some of your country readers to hear of the good results that are attending an experiment I am making with toe-weights on a youngish horse. He is a good horse, but he suffered from the defect of having cat-action. I always tried to make him go well up to his bit, and even tried him with a stiff bearing-rein, but all to no purpose. Then it was suggested to me to try him with toe-weights, similar to those that the Americans use to make their trotters throw out their feet well. The result has been very successful. The horse still has a tendency to his natural action, but in a much less marked degree, and throws his feet a deal straighter, both back and forward, than he used to. I shall be glad to hear whether any other of your readers have happened to treat the same defect in the same way, for at present mine is an isolated instance, whereas, if it could be corroborated by the experience of others, we might draw the useful deduction that the remedy may be fairly relied on to cure this defective action that spoils many good horses, and in some cases makes them most untrustworthy. My horse is now, I believe, as sure-footed as he has any need to be, thanks, I am fully convinced, to the weights I have put on his toes. Of course, I do not use them always, but only when the horse is at exercise; but the encouragement he has thus received to throw his feet straight seems to remain with him when the weights are removed. I mention the matter, thinking it might be of interest and possible use to your readers.—L. N.

[We are much obliged by our correspondent's letter, and shall be glad to hear whether any of our readers are able to corroborate his experience, as he suggests.—ED.]

SUGGESTION FOR COLLECTING RAIN WATER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The recent drought, unusual at this season of the year, has suggested several novel modes of saving water to country people who have not hitherto been often brought face to face with such necessity, and one that appears to me worthy of some publicity has been brought to my notice lately. It is intended primarily for the saving of rain water for agricultural purposes on farms which would often be benefited by irrigation. It consists in the erection of a great expanse of corrugated iron roofing—say to the extent of half an acre—draining into a reservoir made at some point of the estate from which the water could easily be turned on to lower-lying land. An unsightly erection, it will be said. True, but it is utility, not beauty, that we are considering. And a costly expedient, it may be added. True again, but when once the outlay has been made there can be no further doubt about getting an adequate water supply. The subsequent expense would be trifling. Moreover, the roofing of corrugated iron would serve other valuable purposes also—as a place for the drying of hay in a wet season; as a storage place for root crops, and so on. It should be noted, too, that it is not necessary to have a tank of such capacity as shall suffice for the whole annual supply of water required, or anything like it. The rainfall is fairly distributed throughout the year, in this country, and it would be enough that the capacity of the tank should be sufficient to insure the tract lying under its irrigation of water enough to make it independent of, say, a three months' drought. This is surely the limit of what we have to fear in this direction in this country.—J. F. RAWNSLEY.

Notes from my Diary

by Mlle. Sans-Gêne.

MONDAY: Trixie has gone off to Paris again. She never settles herself in London for two consecutive months, but I suppose I must forgive her shortcoming—and stoppings—for thus does she keep me supplied with the latest news of the latest novelties of fashion; and what woman would exact more from another? She writes me this morning:—

“DEAR SANS-GÈNE,—

“I am sure it is foggy and dull in town. Here we have bright blue sky and a gorgeous sun. It is bitterly cold, and we are enwrapped in our sables from morning to night. I am not enwrapped in mine to so great an extent as I could desire, for my cape only reaches to my waist; however, in the immediate future it is to be lengthened, according to the latest decree of fashion, by two roulades of sable, and lined with an ivory satin frill, covered with a frill of lace. These roulades are well stuffed, being merely Brobdingnagian pipings, which recall to my mind the costumes I have met on the ladies of Tudor times, who now fret their waxen days at Madame Tussauds. The other method of trimming fur capes is with a frill of satin covered with a frill of chiffon the same colour as the fur, the chiffon not being plainly gathered, but elaborately tucked and drawn. I know you will say it is incongruous to combine chiffon and fur, but this is mere captiousness on your part. A chiffon cravat completes the capes thus frilled, and the best example I have met of these was of chinchilla, with the chiffon in grey, and the lining in turquoise blue. Writing of turquoise reminds me that this is a very popular stone, and the amount of jewellery worn over here is positively amazing. Should you want to be within measureable distance of the fashion—while you read this I can see your contemptuous look at the bare suggestion that you are not hand in hand with that capricious dame—buy yourself jewels. Go to your beloved Parisian Diamond Company—whose three addresses you are for ever imprinting on my mind until I believe when I die they will be found engraved on my heart, 43, Burlington Arcade, 85, New Bond Street, and 143, Regent Street—and buy at once a muff chain of diamonds set clearly. These are indispensable to every modish muff. Then, again, supply yourself with a collar of pearls of many rows slightly festooned and caught at intervals with diamond bars. Should your purse or your conscience not permit you to so large an expenditure, then buy, and this also I know you can get from your Parisian Diamond Company, some diamond slides, fixing these on to a ribbon or velvet, and wearing them round your neck tightly in the evening; or, again, let these diamond slides do duty on a waistband of ribbon, or let them exercise their influence on your lace cravat. There is to be no backsliding in this matter, my friend, you must have a diamond slide, so make up your mind and take a cab at once to attend to it. And at the same time, of course, if you see one that strikes you as too good for you, post it over to your most affectionate friend

TRIXIE.

“P.S.—I will write you again in a day or two.”

TUESDAY: There are only two occupations worthy of mention during the day time. The one is to shop, the other is to skate, and every wise woman will devote her morning to the one joy and her afternoon to the other. Thus, think I, who am above all things, a wise woman. Shopping is an occupation fraught with much difficulty. There is an element of excitement in reaching the counter of our desires; it is a positive battle to get served when we have arrived there, but we fought and conquered nobly this morning, Nellie and I. We were seeking chiffon sashes to offer at the feet or the waist of some of our girl friends—these are so attractive, made in white or in colours and frilled with narrow ribbons. Another gift which seemeth good unto us, and which we hope will seem good unto the recipients of our seasonable liberality, is the newest tie made of glacé of one colour and hemmed with another. It has only just arrived from Paris and is very attractive.

Nellie bought for Tom's sister a charming collarette of sable, made in the new frilled style and lined with ermine,



SILK TEA GOWN, EMBROIDERED WITH SEQUINS.

fastening in the front with many sable tails. The only drawback to the charms of this is, that it calls aloud for completion by a sable muff lined with ermine, and the like is not to be cheaply acquired.

There is much difficulty in discovering anything new in penholders. The authorities seem to have exhausted their inventive powers when they have combined an agate handle with a gold top, and these are chilly to hold and ugly to look upon. Demanding a gun-metal penholder tipped with gold and decorated, we were told everywhere that the like is only made abroad. Why is gun-metal only worked abroad I wonder, such a state of affairs should not be allowed to continue. There are pencils of every description made with three colours and four colours, curiously useless they are; save to an exalted editor or a mere journalist, what is the use of a blue and red pencil? I am told, though that blue pencils are much used by company promoters, who would be wise in the exercise of their virtues if



VELVET HAT, WITH EMBROIDERED CROWN.

they used them freely, and theatrical managers also have been known to need the blue pencil, but for the ordinary man who is a soldier, and a gentleman, a scholar, or even a stockbroker, I cannot see the attraction of a tri-coloured pencil. We saw a most delightful pen-wiper to-day, made of silver in the form of a door-scraper, it is very new and as useful as it is pretty.

Nellie persisted in buying a silver belt made in links and much pierced. These offer themselves as a change from the jewelled belts. Of all the belts the most becoming are those of narrow leather, buckled with metal of some kind, or those of black ribbon, well appointed with Parisian diamond slides, have a great many of my affections.

Nellie's most interesting purchase was a Polyphon, destined to delight a small army of nephews and nieces. I enjoyed investigating with her the charms of this, for it was new to me, and it appears to contain within itself all the virtues of every musical box ever invented, and flows with a soft undercurrent of sound, a joy to the ear which has ever been tortured by the ordinary variety of such instruments. Nicole Frères, 21, Ely Place, who introduced us to this Polyphon, are having a big success with it. It plays any number of airs, including the latest and most popular.

How tired I was after shopping. There is nothing half so fatiguing in life as buying things for other people. I had to complete the morning's entertainment by the purchase of a net gown for myself, which is to do duty over a white satin skirt of yesteryear. The net is of the palest yellow tone, made in one with a flouncing, and it is to be trimmed with three rows of chiffon ruching, a band of pale blue round the waist, and a bunch of pink roses at the décolletage.

In the immediate future we shall abandon spangles for the joys of soft chiffon and lace dresses—thus has it been written by me, and if I cannot anticipate the immediate future what is the use of me? The family would arise and cry, "Not much!"—but they would not mean it, I know.

IN THE GARDEN.

A PEARLY-WHITE flower lifts its head above a mass of deep green leaves at this season. It is the Christmas Rose (*Helleborus niger*), as pure and beautiful as any hardy plant of British gardens. We should welcome it in July; it is not a flower that we appreciate in winter, because there is little else to look at in beds and borders. The Hellebores are a larger family than many suppose. It comprises the fascinating Lenten Roses, those wonderfully varied flowers in colouring—some crimson, others mottled and spotted with colour, a few creamy or greenish-white. We will confine our remarks on the present occasion to the Christmas Rose, the pearl of winter, *H. niger*, of which we give a faithful illustration. The finest variety is called *Altiolus*, and is also known as *Maximus*, *major*, *grandiflorus*, besides other names, each denoting that the kind has special merit. This form flowers long before the festive season, continuing, however, to bloom through December. It is larger altogether than the type, the flowers three inches or more across, white suffused with rose on the outside of the petals, and borne on strong stems, each of which carries several flowers. The stem is mottled with purple, also the leaf, but in *H. niger* these are of a plain green colour. Minor is a smaller kind.

GROWING CHRISTMAS ROSES.

The Hellebore is very easily grown. It is, of course, perfectly hardy, and a fair jewel to beautify margins of shrubbery borders, or quiet, sheltered spots, where its handsome leaves are in harmony with the surroundings. It is necessary to prepare the soil, unless rich, by incorporating with it well-decayed manure, loam, and sharp silver sand. Unless there is a good foundation, success is hopeless. The position in which the plants are to go must be thoroughly drained. Moisture is certainly required, but not stagnation. When such plants as Christmas Roses, that enjoy high living, are planted near shrubs, they dwindle away in time, unless watched. The shrub roots draw all sustenance from the soil, and leave little for the flowers.

CHRISTMAS ROSES UNDER GLASS.

When the flowers are fully exposed, they naturally suffer from rains and wind. If desired for gathering, the plants should be grown in positions away from the general resorts, in a reserve garden, if possible, where the plants are chiefly grown for cutting to fill bowls in the house. When the buds are of fair size, cover each clump with a handlight and heap round it leaves or other fermenting material to urge the flowers forward. Another excellent way to secure spotless blossoms is to lift very fine crowns and place them in ordinary bushel baskets, filling up with cocoa-nut fibre. Put the baskets in a warm corner of the greenhouse, keep moist, and large flowers, without the rose tinge seen in those outdoors, will be the reward.

THE PERNETTYAS.

We have received an interesting and instructive note from Mr. G. F. Wilson, F.R.S., Heatherbank, Weybridge Heath, about the Pernettyas, a charming group of peat-loving shrubs, which flourish amazingly at Weybridge, the shrubs being loaded at this season with varied coloured berries. Mr. Wilson writes:—

"I send you a boxful of Pernettyas, which I think are not nearly enough grown in gardens. They were exhibited many years ago at one of the shows of the Royal Horticultural Society, by L. T. Davis, of Hillsborough, County Down. I was so much struck with the beauty of the many coloured berries, that I ordered a collection, roughly calculated as costing two guineas, but there were so many more shades of colour than I expected that the bill amounted to ten guineas. I have, however, never regretted the purchase. In winter, when flowers are scarce, the bright berries take their place. We have now many thousand plants at Wisley, and find that they grow most freely in vegetable soil in rather damp places. The birds spare the berries until late in the winter, but eventually the seeds are deposited about the garden, and plants spring up in all sorts of places. In hard winters some of the shoots are cut, but, when pruned, make nice compact bushes. Many nurserymen now grow the plants, and they are no longer expensive."

GARDEN ARCHES.

As alterations in gardens are now being made, we hope, if arches for climbing plants are to be constructed, they will be as simple as possible. Elaborate designs are out of place; they are not necessary, and money spent on such affairs would be better utilised in buying good hardy plants. Use rough stems, strong, but not twisted into fanciful shapes. Cloth them with a variety of climbers—the Dijon Tea Roses in particular, as these give a wealth of flowers for many months. The Ayrshire or Summer Roses, unfortunately, have a brief flowering season. Their brilliant beauty is soon past. Clematis Jackmani, the winter-flowering *Jasminum nudiflorum*, *Tropæolum canariense*, or Canary Creeper, and in the Southern Counties such charming plants as *Solanum jasminoides*, are all available for the rustic arches. Always plant them in good soil, and during the first summer give plenty of water.

PRIVET—A POOR SHRUB.

We lately saw a garden in which every other shrub seemed to be the Privet. We hope, as shrubs will be planted from now until the spring, that the Privet will be excluded. No shrub robs the soil more of precious nutriment, and when in flower a pungent, unpleasant odour pervades the garden. Even in robust health the Privet wears a depressing look. It is quick in growth, certainly, but that does not atone for its bad qualities.

BRICKWORK IN THE LONDON PARKS.

We notice in the Embankment Gardens cart-loads of bricks, we presume for the "embellishment" of these open spaces, and one can scarcely expect anything more pleasant from the London County Council. The bandstand, with the lamp stuck on its apex, is funny enough, but the brickwork erection is too bad. We were thinking last summer how free the gardens were of "rockeries," but our pleasant thoughts are now utterly dispelled. A thousand beautiful flowers and shrubs are at command to plant, jewels from our own and other lands, which will even flourish in spite of County Council treatment in the shape of constant pruning or vexatious digging about the roots, then why fill up the place with brickwork?

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.—We gladly advise anyone desiring information about the garden, whether in the fruit, flower, or other departments.



Photo. by

CHRISTMAS ROSES.

C. Metcalfe.